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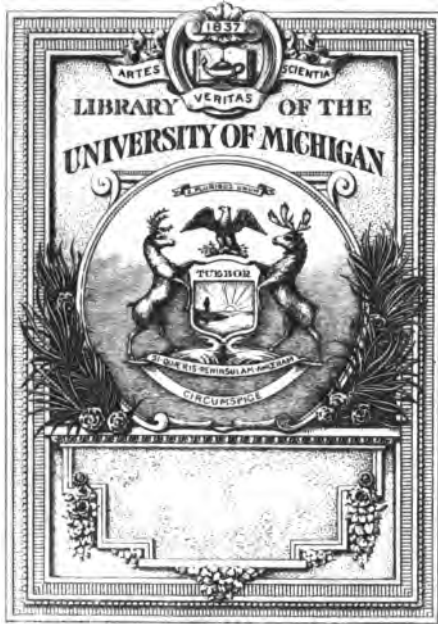
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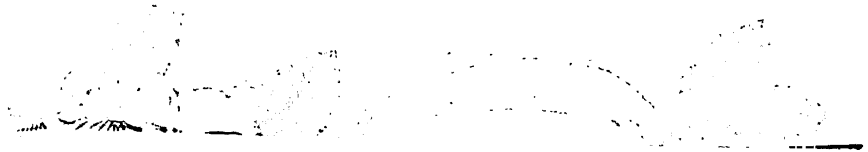
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BY JACK BIRD

THE
LIFE OF

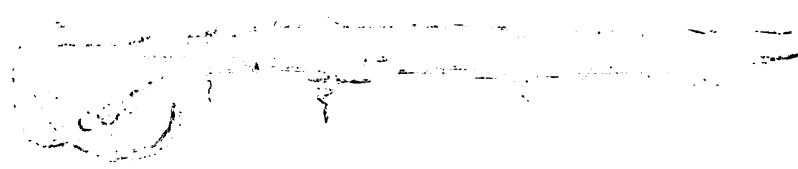


SCOTTISH KING

1714-1746

THE CRADLE OF THE REVOLUTION

BY JACK BIRD





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1950

1951

1952

1953

1954

1955



BLACKBIRD

A story of Mackinac
Island



BY

SCOTA SORIN

Troop, Mrs. Edna Villa (Sullivan)

ILLUSTRATIONS AND DECORATIONS

BY

CLYDE E. DARR



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1907



05-7-28

BLACKBIRD

TOLD IN THE LETTERS OF

Miss Maraquita Dane, Native of Mackinac
Island.

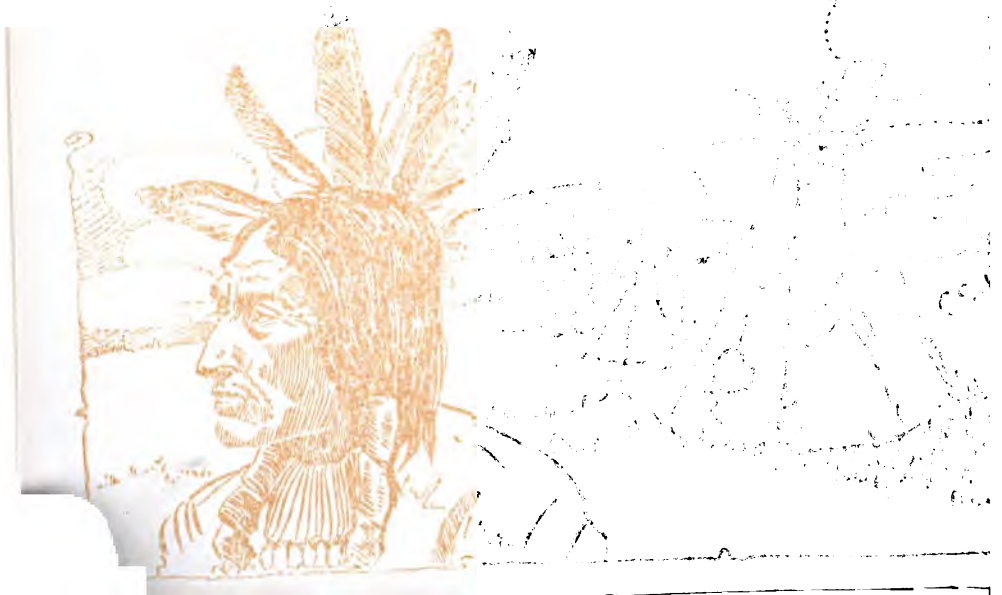
Miss Margaret Deland, of Chicago.

Miss Isabelle Thorn, of New York.

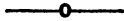
Miss Jessamine C., the Colonel's daughter.

Lieutenant John Beech, U. S. A.

Lieutenant John Grane, U. S. A.

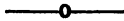


ILLUSTRATIONS



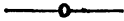
"I have never forgotten the first glimpse of my birth place."

Frontispiece.



"I was seated in a high window, draped in a Spanish mantilla, smiling over my fan at a troubadour, Lieutenant Beech, strumming a guitar and singing "Juanita."

Facing Page 17.



"And so sat we three, filled with conflicting emotions the long day through, until twilight."

Facing Page 132.



Blackbird

"LETTER I."

From Miss Maraquita Dane to Miss
Margaret Deland.

New York, June 1860.

My dear Margaret:—

The last act of our school life will take place in five days, and then life will begin in all earnestness for the class of '60. The exams are over and we are busy making garlands and festoons which are to be relieved with great clusters of palest moss rosebuds to decorate the Assembly Hall, and in the midst of all this floral beauty I shall stand just where you stood last year, and read the Class Prophecy.



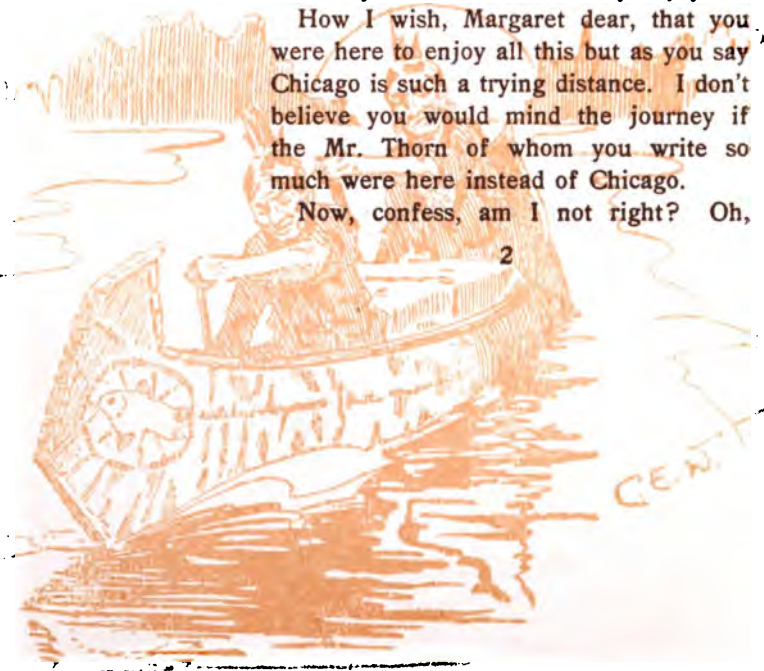
BLACKBIRD

I mean to predict something horrible for that disagreeable Ellen Beech with her insufferable airs over her Mayflower ancestors and her brother, Lieutenant Beech. I am sure he is a 'prig' and feel the Ball will prove it, as he is to be here in all the glory of his uniform. Oh, that Ball. Every girl's heart is dancing with glee already with the thought of it.

Miss Jane impresses upon us each day that we are to be sedate, yet joyous; animated, yet not boisterous. Dear old Soul, she little dreams that we mean to coquette, flirt and dance to our hearts' content; to fill every moment with unalloyed joy.

How I wish, Margaret dear, that you were here to enjoy all this but as you say Chicago is such a trying distance. I don't believe you would mind the journey if the Mr. Thorn of whom you write so much were here instead of Chicago.

Now, confess, am I not right? Oh,





A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

dear, there is the bell for prayers.

I am to go to Newport with Aunt Dane
and will write you from there. Until
then, I am

Yours devotedly and lovingly,

Maraquita.



"LETTER 2."

Lieut. John Beech to Lieut. John Crane,
Fort Sumter.

Boston, Mass., June 1860.

Dear old Chap:—

Here I am at home; escorted my small sister from New York where I attended her graduation and the ball at Miss Jane D's Seminary.

The ball, —"thereby hangs a tale."—
The Class Prophecy was given by a charming maid; flashing eyes; raven tresses; lithe and supple form; dainty hands and feet; purely Spanish type; name, the sweetest in the world,—"Maraquita."

Can you imagine her? Well, draw a mental picture of the most beautiful bru-

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

nette you have ever seen, then picture a beauteous creature ten thousand times more beautiful than you have ever dreamed could exist—and you will not even then do my Maraquita justice.

I say *mine* for I mean to win her and I am just conceited enough to feel sure I can. The opportunity is offered, for, though her home is in a far Western State, she—My adored one—is to pass the summer at Newport with Mrs. Dane, a charming English woman, sister to my Angel's father.

I am off to Newport tomorrow where I will hope to hear from you, but remember if I do not write it is not that I have forgotten the friend of my boyhood but that I am blinded by the glances of the bright, bright eyes of Maraquita.

Yours for Victory or Death,
John Beech.



"LETTER 3."

Miss Margaret Deland to Maraquita.

Chicago, June '60.

My dear Maraquita:—

You have been in my thoughts almost constantly to-day; so much so that I could not compose myself to rest without writing you a line at least.

The Class Prophecy is no doubt over with as far as you are concerned, or at least as far as your reading went. The laurel crown has been placed on your raven tresses and you have crossed the threshold into real life; and while I am writing, you are dancing on merrily, dancing into your fate whatever it may prove to be.

Were you unkind to Ellen Beech? I

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

hope not, she would not be disagreeable if it were not for those Mayflower passengers; personally, I think she ought to be ashamed of ancestors who arrived on such an over-crowded ship as the Mayflower must have been.

Be kind to Ellen, it really is not her fault you know, but enough of her, and now to a list of questions about you, dearest Maraquita.

Of what material was your gown? Tell me all about it ere I die of curiosity. The ball, was it as grand as ours of '59? Your admirers, how many, who and where from?

I am certain you had many beaux. What is planned for your future? Are you going home, or will you remain in New York?

Now I have a great piece of news to tell you, something you could never guess.



7



"LETTER 4."

Miss Maraquita Dane to Margaret De-
land.

Newport, July '60.

My dear Margaret:—

What a piece of news your letter contained. I do wish you joy unqualified but I cannot get over you, of all girls, going to marry an old man, for one is indeed old at fifty-three; just think if you have children their Papa will seem like their Grandfather. I am afraid I would have chosen the nephew, in fact, I am sure I would for at present brass buttons and a Lieutenant's uniform have a strange attraction for me and yet I cannot blame you for thinking it will be grand to be an old man's darling for I am enjoying the

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

first petting I have ever received and ask myself each day, isn't it just lovely to just live and be petted as I am by dear Auntie Dane? Dear Auntie approves of almost everything I do; almost not quite, for she wishes me more like Miss Thorn: a fragile delicate flower who fainted in Lieutenant Beech's arms when she saw a toad and had to be carried in those same arms back to the house. Be like her? Ugh, I'd like to scratch her eyes out.

Aunt says fainting was exactly proper under the circumstances. I wonder if the Lieutenant thought so. He is such a dear that I have forgiven Ellen Beech those Mayflower passengers.

My gown was a dream. Auntie purchased it at Stewart's. All white, the skirt in festoons caught with pale moss rosebuds which were our class flower, and rosebuds in my hair: you will understand how pret-



BLACKBIRD

ty it is when I tell you that Miss Jane said I was "vanity personified." I cannot tell you what relief it is to get away from that Seminary. Another year of its restraint and there would have been no more of me.

I am not going home until October. My father attended the graduation and bade me remain with my Aunt until October. And while I am enjoying each day's pleasure here, I am also longing to go home, to see and know my mother. Just think of not being able to remember one's own mother. I have not even a daguerreotype of mine. I was only four years old when Uncle Dane died and father let Auntie bring me to New York for company for her and has not let me go home since.

When I ask why Mama does not come to see me he says the distance is too long for so timid a soul to venture and I must be content to wait.

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

Lieutenant Beech is not ugly like Ellen but is handsome and gallant, never murmured when he carried Miss Thorn. I wonder if he loves her? She has such beautiful golden hair, the Lieutenant calls mine midnight tresses and seems to like them.

We are to have a hop this evening; just the guests of this hotel. I am wild with delight for I have received no less than four bouquets from four gentlemen, each one requesting that I carry his this evening. If one were from the Lieutenant I would carry his and his alone but now I mean to carry all four.

Write me soon, dearest Margaret, and tell me what you are doing.

All love to my Margaret,
Maraquita.

P. S. After all I shall carry his flowers alone.

"LETTER 5."

Lieutenant Grane to Lieutenant Beech.

Fort Sumter, July 1860.

My dear Beech:—

So you are following a petticoat and a school-girl at that, Spanish type, etc. No doubt moonlight madness and warbling Juanita under her window accompanies the disease.

Let me see, at Christmas time you wrote me of a stately blonde and called her "My Imogene." I'll look for an auburn haired dream about Thanksgiving day. Well, old chap, good luck to you, but if you keep on you'll be a shining citizen of Utah.

Everything with us at Sumter goes on in the same old routine but I fear if this



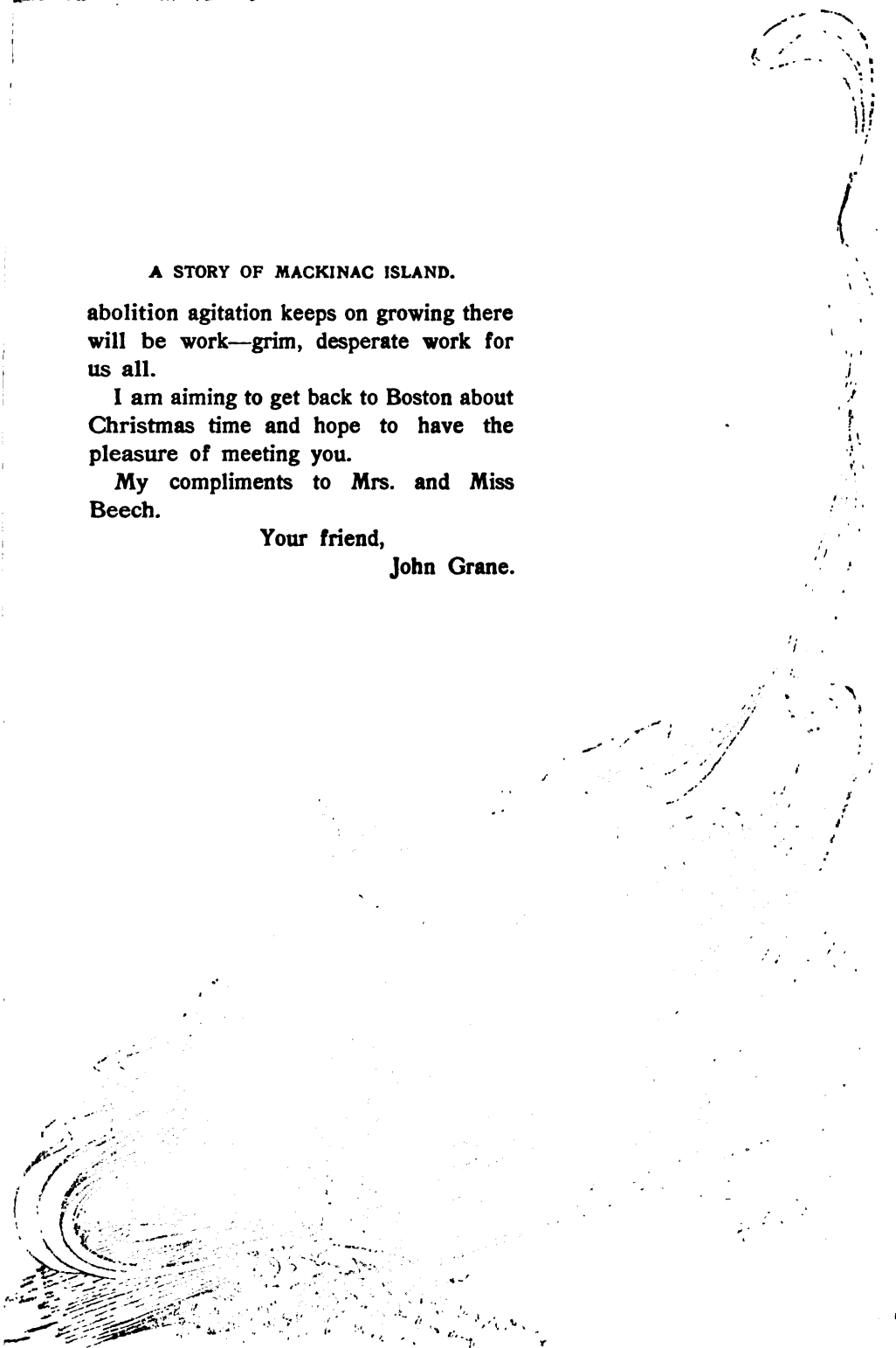
A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

abolition agitation keeps on growing there will be work—grim, desperate work for us all.

I am aiming to get back to Boston about Christmas time and hope to have the pleasure of meeting you.

My compliments to Mrs. and Miss Beech.

Your friend,
John Grane.





"LETTER 6."

Maraquita to Margaret.

Newport, August 1860.

My dear Margaret:—

It is very late. I've danced with all the young men and many of the old gallants. Such a gay evening; first we had tableaux vivants and music, the proceeds to be given the Five Points Mission in New York. Mrs. S., a stately New York dowager, was directress.

There was Rebecca at the Well, posed by the wealthy Miss Guginslocker. Then Romeo and Juliet—the balcony scene. Romeo, Lieutenant Beech; Juliet, that Miss Thorn; the floor of Juliet's balcony was a ladder supported by one of the hotel port-



M. J. Warr
07

THE ISLAND

He was riding a car-
riage and a man into
the street. He had
a white horse and it galloped
and he probably screamed
at the sudden leaving
of the horse. My tobacco
pipe was crushed by
the wheel and was hurled to a high
altitude. I could not really smile
at the scene. I was in a
state of anger and grief.
I was decidedly the sur-
vivor. Lieutenant Bacon
was a good voice and such
a good man that to me, I
was glad I had only one eye
and that is what that is cos-







A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

ers. Just as everyone was gazing enraptured on the beautiful Juliet, a mosquito lit on the porter's nose; he took one hand away from the ladder which made it rather unsteady, Juliet promptly screamed and hurried down the ladder, leaving Romeo gazing into space. My tableau was called Juanita and was arranged by Lieutenant Beech. I was seated in a high window, draped in a Spanish mantilla, smiling over my fan at a troubadour, Lieutenant Beech, strumming a guitar and singing Juanita. We were decidedly the success of the evening. Lieutenant Beech has a most sympathetic voice and such eloquent eyes. I'll finish this to-morrow, dearest Margaret. I had only one eye open when I commenced and that is closing, so good-night.



BLACKBIRD

August 1860.

My dear:—

Well, I said I would finish this in the morning and now it must be considered so for I am going for my morning dip. Just saw my Lieutenant going, closely followed by Miss Thorn.

With a heart full of love for my dearest Margaret,

Maraqita.



"LETTER 7."

Margaret to Maraquita.

Dear little Maraquita:—

What a happy bundle of feminine inconsistency you are. So Miss Thorn was following the Lieutenant, what was Maraquita doing, poor child? I don't like to read "My Lieutenant" for I have met the gentleman and thought him shallow and selfish, though in the latter trait he is not unlike most men, selfishness seems a trait of the sex; but there, I must not sermonize against the dear Lieutenant.

What will you do without the 'dear' when October comes? Mackinac, I am sure is a dreary place in winter, little one; but, oh charming thought, there are Lieutenants and brass buttons galore in the



BLACKBIRD

old Fort on the Hill and by Christmas my school-girl will be writing me of, let us say, a gallant Captain, for one should advance in life.

Better watch Miss Thorn.

With dearest love,

Margaret.



"LETTER 8."

Maraquita to Margaret.

New York, September 1860.

My dear Margaret:—

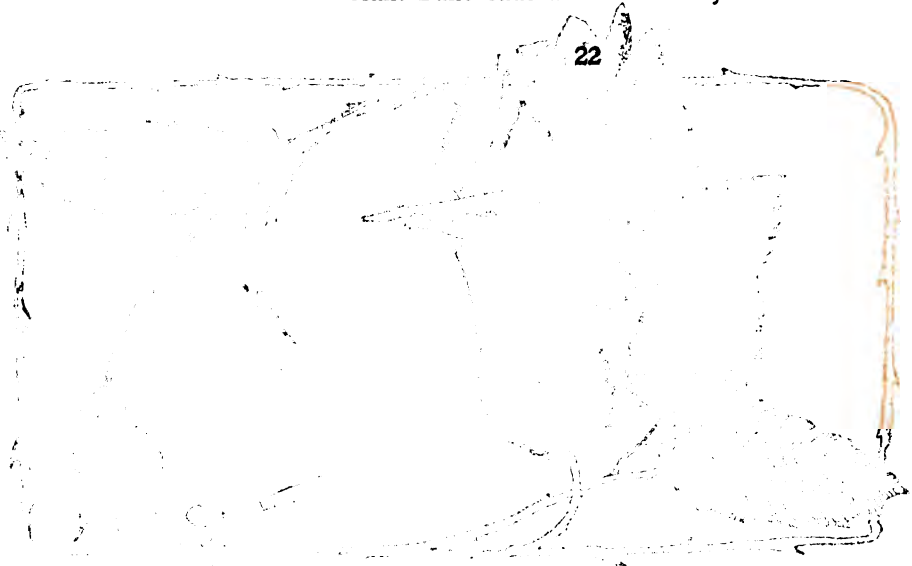
Back to town in two days and the joyous summer ended. My Lieutenant is going back to West Point; you see I still say 'my' in defiance of your advice which I did not like, except one part "Watch Miss Thorn." I did that like the "Argus Eyed" and saw a funny sight.

We played at croquet upon the sward, Miss Thorn resplendent in a flowered muslin with many pink ribbons floating on the wind, likewise a pink plume on a tiny hat which surmounted Miss Thorn's blonde chignon. Many said she was a lovely picture of fragile beauty. Alas for the picture. Clumsy Miss Guginslocker aimed

BLACKBIRD



her ball at a wicket near where Miss Thorn was standing with Lieutenant Beech. The ball did not pass through the wicket but came within a few inches of Miss Thorn's feet. They say "a miss is as good as a mile," but not to Miss Thorn with the Lieutenant's arms near. That is Miss Thorn's cue to faint, and faint she did. The Lieutenant carried her to the hotel, and as they went up the steps her chignon fell off. Miss Thorn was placed in a chair on the verandah, still faint. A little Frenchman picked up the chignon and with a courtly bow to me said "Pardon, will ma'mselle permit me to ask that she take from off zis hand ze chignon of Ma'mselle Thorn." Ma'mselle Thorn opened wide those eyes of azure, fairly snatched the chignon and ran to her room, while I stood there and shook with glee until Aunt Dane bade me come to my chamber



A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

where I am now writing, my dearest Margaret.

I have just been interrupted by Ellen Beech tapping at my door. I went to her chamber to see the gown she is to wear this evening; it is from Stewart's; one of the new coatee robes of white tarletan, the bodice and coatee lined with blue silk. A blue floral headdress is to be worn with this exquisite creation. I told her of Miss Thorn's accident and she is sorry, for she does so want John to marry Miss Thorn; her antecedents were Mayflower passengers and it would be a perfect alliance.

Do you know I still dislike Ellen Beech.

Adieu, Margaret dearest, until in town you hear from

Your loving

Maraquita.





"LETTER 9."

Lieutenant Beech to Lieutenant Grane.
Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York.
Thanksgiving.

My dear Grane:—

Thanksgiving is here and it is still the Spanish type in spite of all your predictions of last summer.

She has been in New York all Fall and I came here only this morning to attend a ball given by Mr. A. T. Stewart at his marble palace on Fifth Avenue, and such a ball, I, like the Count DeLaP., can only say "Magnifique." My charmer was there superbly gowned in brightest red. We danced, she like down on the wind. We sat in a secluded corner. What passed is too sacred for even you, old man, to share. But Maraquita is really *my* Maraquita and



A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

I am to speak to Auntie to-morrow, no to-day, for it is three a. m. I am the happiest man in the army, too happy to sleep; so shall take a turn in the square, smoke and think of my own, my Maraquita.

Yours,

Beech.





"LETTER 10."

Lieutenant Grane to Beech.

Fort Sumter, Dec. '60.

My dear Beech:—

Congratulations. But I never thought it of you. If you were not pledged to the young lady I would not think it now, but as you are a soldier and a man of honor I must believe it; so here's to the future Mrs. B. and the first little B. May he be of Spanish type and U. S. true blue through and through.

"Hip and a tiger."

Grane.



"LETTER 11."

Lieut. Beech to Grane.

West Point, January 1861.

My dear Grane:—

Thanks, old chap, for all your kind wishes and congratulations and the tiger for the first little B., or rather for John Grane Beech. Like the name, old man? However all happiness is tainted with some disappointment and in my case it is a transfer. Received orders this morning to report at Fort Pickens, Santa Rosa Island, Florida, on January 28th. I had hoped to remain here as Maraquita will be in New York until May, when she with Mrs. Dane will leave for Mackinac Island, Mich., where we are to be married in June, but instead I leave to-night for Boston and New York which will barely give me time to reach Fort Pickens by the 28th.

Almost train time, so Au Revoir until I reach the Sunny South.

Beech.



"LETTER 12."

Maraquita to Margaret.

January 1861.

My dear Margaret:—

Lieut. Beech does not love Miss Thorn. No indeed, for on Thanksgiving night I attended a ball given at the home of Mr. A. T. Stewart, a merchant prince, living in a fairy palace and now the fairy Godfather of my dreams. At this ball I again met Lieut. Beech and Miss Thorn, whom he seemed to have forgotten, but he remembered me; of that there is no doubt, as the beautiful cluster of diamonds on my heart finger attests. Oh, I am filled with joy and glad that Aunt Dane's illness prevented us going to Mackinac before the ice formed.

We will remain at the Astor House all

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

winter and go to Mackinac in June when I shall be married if father consents; and he will, he must, for June is ideal for brides.

We will attend service today at quaint St. Mark's, where they say each pewholder is a millionaire. We are going with Mr. and Mrs. Stewart and dine with them afterward.

It is bitter cold and time for me to don my mantua, an exquisite one of red velvet which Aunt Dane gave me yesterday.

I would have written this great news before, but since your marriage you have been such a bird of passage I knew not where to address you.

Wish much joy to your loving

Maraquita.

"LETTER 13."

Mrs. Thorn, nee Deland, to Maraquita.

Paris, March 1861.

My dear Maraquita:—

Owing to some unaccountable delay I have been unable to answer your letter until to-day.

I do indeed wish you joy, a Heaven full, or at least as much happiness as I have myself, which since my marriage is boundless. When shall you marry? June you said, but there are thirty days in that month, and what shall you wear? Shall I look up the fashions for you here in this gay and wicked city? Of course I am to be invited to the wedding and hope to be under our own bonnie flag in time for it, though Mr. Thorn is in no hurry to return to America and talks some of summering in Switzerland, yet I think it possible I may persuade or coax him into thinking Mack-

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

inac Island as good; you see, my dear, being an "old man's darling" has its advantages for me for I love my own way.

Apropos of Miss Thorn, we received an invitation to dine with some distant relatives of my husband, the widow of a cousin about one hundred and ten times removed, and her daughter who are spending the period of their mourning in Paris. My maid handed me your letter just as I was about to leave for their hotel; I read it on the way and during the dinner, Isabelle Thorn mentioned Newport and I spoke of you, she remembered meeting you and told me how beautiful you were in the tableaux vivant. I told her of your engagement to the Troubadour of the tableaux, Lieutenant Beech. I am afraid your jealousy of Isabelle blinded you to her beauty. I am enraptured with her and am told half of Paris agrees with me, the



BLACKBIRD

male portion admiring to the point of rudeness, in standing around her carriage when it waits and in following when she is afoot.

Her father died in December leaving her many millions, so when they have laid aside their mourning I expect Isabelle will be the Belle of Paris; I do not know what the American men at Newport last year were thinking of.

Do you know, though I am wishing you much joy, I am disappointed for I had set my heart on you and John Grane marrying, and now it is too late for me to carry out my plan of having you meet at my home and becoming a veritable match-maker right up to the point of saying "Bless you, my children" and then sitting back and gloating over your perfect happiness. John Grane is my husband's nephew and after his Uncle the most perfect man in existence.



A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

**Now you tormenting, disappointing,
black-eyed beauty, I will leave you to
meditate.**

**Write soon to yours with love,
Margaret.**



"LETTER 14."

**Mrs. Margaret Thorn to Lieut. Grane.
Paris, March 1861.**

My dear Nephew:—

Why did you not go to Newport last summer as I directed? Why, Oh why, I ask with sorrow, for I have just received a letter from the dearest girl in the world announcing her betrothal to that "Cad," Lieut. Beech.

Yours in haste,

Margaret.



"LETTER 15."

Lieut. Grane to Mrs. Margaret Thorn.

Fort Sumter, April 1861.

My dear Margaret:—

What, Oh what, I ask with sorrow, had my preference to Cape May and consequent failure to visit Newport to do with Beech's engagement to "the dearest girl in the world?"

With respects to Uncle and you, my venerable Aunt, from

Nephew John.



"LETTER 16."

Mrs. Margaret Thorn to Lieut. Grane.

Paris, April 1861.

My dear Nephew:—

Had you gone to Newport you would have met and loved the dearest girl in the world and brought joy to the heart of your venerable

Aunt Margaret.



"LETTER 17."

Miss Isabelle Thorn to John Beech.

Paris, March 1861.

My dear Lieutenant:—

On looking over the contents of a forgotten box, I found the testament which you so kindly loaned me at Newport last summer, and learned my maid had neglected to return it as I directed.

Kindly let me know if you are still at West Point so that I may forward it and feel assured that you receive it.

Yours sincerely,

Isabelle Thorn.





“LETTER 18.”

Lieut. Beech to Isabelle Thorn.

Fort Pickens, Santa Rosa Island, Fla.

April 1861.

My dear Miss Thorn:—

It was with much pleasure I received your kind note which was forwarded from West Point to Fort Pickens where I have been in command during the furlough of Lieut. Adam.

The change from the chill winds of the Hudson to this tropical clime has been a delightful experience, but the return of Lieut. Adam this morning puts me again under “marching orders,” this time to Harper’s Ferry, where I am quite certain we shall soon see stormy days, for war seems to be upon us.

In regard to the testament, may I beg you not to return it, but on the contrary to accept it as a memento of a day which



A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

shall ever linger in my memory with pleasure at having been fortunate enough to be of service to earth's fairest daughter.

Begging you will thus favor me, I am,

Respectfully,

John Beech.





"LETTER 19."

**Extract from the diary of Miss Isabelle
Thorn.**

Paris, April 1861.

To-day the Herr Graf called for his answer and just before he was announced I received a letter from Lieutenant Beech requesting me to keep the testament and calling me "earth's fairest daughter." Can Margaret Thorn be mistaken about his engagement to marry Maraquita Dane? Shall I keep the book? I am living in a confused maze. Why? If he is engaged to Miss Dane, is he not disloyal to write me as he does? I should not keep the testament or write him knowing all I do, yet I am certain I will.



"LETTER 20."

Miss Thorn to Lieut. Beech.

Paris, April 1861.

My dear Lieutenant:—

Ah, you flatterer, even though I am across the "big pond" your flattery follows me and because of it and—well, my woman's vanity—and in memory of a gallant soldier I will accept the little testament. Here in Paris, we hear rumors of trouble and war clouds threatening our beloved country, and while we fear, we scorn to believe, and say, are we not the United States?

Hoping you have not found war, as you anticipated, I am,

Sincerely,

Isabelle Thorn.

"LETTER 21."

Maraquita to Margaret.

New Orleans, April 1861.

My dear Margaret:—

Your letter followed me from New York here, where we have been ever since early February for Aunt Dane's health. The day I last wrote you was the Sunday we attended St. Mark's. Poor Aunt was seized with inflammation of the lungs and for days her life hung on a thread, then as soon as she was permitted to travel we came here. She has grown much stronger and we now think of going to New York, making the preparations for my wedding and then going to Mackinac Island. When we returned to the Astor House on that night in January we found my dear John awaiting us. My surprise and delight at

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

seeing him was soon changed when I learned that he was under orders to report in Florida and had only an hour to spend with me. I shed buckets full of tears and begged him not to go, but I have learned that with a soldier duty comes first and if I am to be a soldier's wife bravery is to be first and so I am brave.

I am indeed interested in Miss Thorn and hope she may marry a Prince; all I ask is the First Lieutenant's quarters at any U. S. post where John may be stationed, and I will be happy.

We hear rumors of war and I fear for his safety, for my own life. To lose him in any way would mean death to me. I sometimes wonder what blood flows through my veins that I love and hate with such intensity. Last summer, at times, when I saw John with Miss Thorn my fingers itched to twine themselves in her





BLACKBIRD

lovely hair and with a sharp knife to tear it from her head. I hated her with all the depth of my nature, and am ashamed to confess I never felt the slightest shame for such thoughts, but now I am no longer so barbaric.

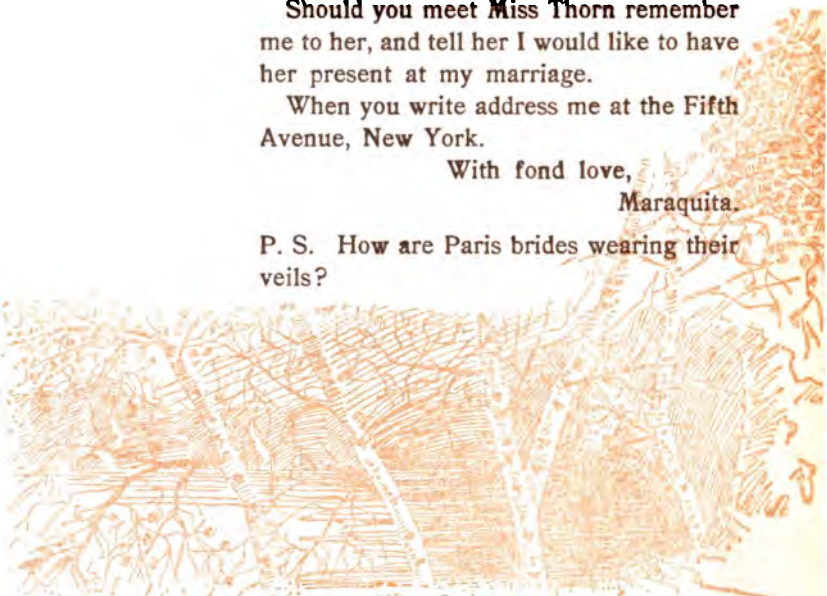
Are we to expect you in June? I hope so for my joy would be incomplete without you.

Should you meet Miss Thorn remember me to her, and tell her I would like to have her present at my marriage.

When you write address me at the Fifth Avenue, New York.

With fond love,
Maraqita.

P. S. How are Paris brides wearing their veils?



"LETTER 22."

Lieut. Grane to Lieut. Beech.

Fort Trumbull, near New London, Conn.

May '61

My dear Beech:—

To my surprise I was ordered to report here on April 14th and so missed being one of the vanquished at Fort Sumter, as on the day I reached here Major Anderson and one hundred and twenty-eight men marched out with the honors of war.

None killed or wounded on either side; all peace negotiations are off and we shall have plenty of action hereafter.

On my way here I spent a day in New York and presented a letter of introduction to Miss Dane, a letter given me almost a year ago with instructions from my Aunt, Mrs. Thorn, to present it at Newport. I



BLACKBIRD

**kept the letter and chose Cape May. Since
meeting Miss Dane I consider my choice
unwise and envy you.**

Let me hear from you.

Grane.



"LETTER 23."

Maraquita to Margaret.
Colonial Farm, near New London, Conn.
May 1861.

My dear Margaret:—

Instead of preparing for my wedding here we are at a quiet farm house near New London. Our stay in New York was very short as Aunt Dane's physician insisted on her leaving the city, the heat and war excitement being more than her strength would bear, as her heart has been weak ever since her illness.

My marriage has been postponed owing to my beloved being in active service during this cruel war into which we are plunged and during which you may be glad to be out of the Country.

I am torn with conflicting emotions. I



BLACKBIRD

would not see the Union dissolved and yet my sympathy goes out to the poor Southerner fighting for his home and property. Some of those men whom we find active in this war would hang a thief who deprived them of a horse and would not allow the horse abused, not always through humane reasons, either, but because a maimed animal is not of value. Does the negro stand in any different light to his Southern master than the horse to us Northerners? If he does not, is it reasonable to think his master would maim him? No, Margaret, much of that cruelty is talk by those who have never been in the South. We were on many plantations and saw no cruelty but saw a contented happy lot of blacks. I am not an abolitionist and when the war is ended I will be glad I have not an abolitionist conscience.

I live in fear of the news each day may bring me, for the troops are hastened away

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

so quickly that we never know whose name may be in the list of wounded or dead and I am certain did anything separate us forever I could not go on living, knowing I would never see my Lieutenant again. Pshaw, why do I dwell on what will not occur, what must not.

I am growing wearily morbid to you I am sure. Oh, by the way, your husband's handsome nephew, Lieut. Grane, called in New York and presented your letter of a year ago and we were much surprised to find him stationed at Fort Trumbull, about a mile distant from here. He has been charming to Aunt Dane and we spend some hours each day assisting the ladies at the Fort in preparing hospital supplies to be forwarded to the front. Lieut. Grane is a great favorite and ever at hand to render service to us.

My father writes we must not think of journeying towards Mackinac while the



BLACKBIRD

war lasts, so we shall remain here indefinitely. It is time for us to go to the Fort to scrape lint. I hope to send you better tidings when I write again.

With love to my dearest Margaret.

Maraquita.





"LETTER 24."

Mrs. Thorn to Lieut. Grane.

Berne, Switzerland,

August 1861.

My dear Nephew:—

So you have the honesty to regret that it was Cape May and not Newport. Let me whisper a small secret. Don't give up hope. Just keep three things before you:

1st: Beech is a cad.

2nd: Isabelle Thorn is a beauty and an heiress.

3rd: Beech and Miss Thorn exchange letters.

Your venerable aunt is looking into the future and sees you happy with "the dearest girl in the world."

Regards from Uncle and
Aunt Margaret.



"LETTER 25."

Lieut. Grane to Mrs. Thorn.

Fort Trumbull, May 1865

My dear Margaret:—

Dropped behind a closet in my quarters I found your letter of August 1861 still unopened. How many changes have come and gone since you mailed it! I have been at the front, fought and invalided back here. Now thank God, the war is ended.

The "dearest girl in the world" as you call her, and so she has become and ever will be to me, is still at Colonial Farms but will leave within a few days for her Island home to prepare for the long deferred marriage to Beech, proving you in spite of your twenty-four venerable years, my esteemed Aunt, a very false prophet.

When do you and my Uncle return to this glorious land of the free and the brave? May it be soon is the wish of your devoted

Grane.



"LETTER 26."

Maraquita to Margaret.

New York, May 1865.

My dearest Margaret:—

Just a hurried line to say we are here to meet my own brave John, now Captain Beech, and after a few days visit, we, that is, Aunt and I, are going to Mackinac, where John will soon follow us with his mother and Ellen who are expected at almost any day from abroad. Have you met them in your travels?

My wedding day is set for June twenty-third. Won't you coax Mr. Thorn to bring you home for it. I have waited so long that I cannot bear any disappointment for, that day and your non-appearance would be terrible.

Write me immediately to Mackinac Island saying you will come.

With fond love,

Maraquita.



"LETTER 27."

Lieut. Beech to Lieut. Grane.

New York, May 1865.

My dear Grane:—

June twenty-third makes me the happiest man in the country. Will you help me launch my bark on the matrimonial sea on that date?

Yours,

Beech.



"LETTER 28."

Lieut. Grane to Lieut. Beech.

Fort Trumbull, May 1865.

My dear Beech:—

Much joy and may a long safe journey on the matrimonial sea be yours.

A crusty old fellow like myself should have nothing to do with such a joyous launching, and in this case fate prevents it, for I have a long furlough and on June 20th will sail for foreign climes.

Wishing you all good wishes,

Grane.





"LETTER 29."

Maraquita to Margaret.

New York, May 1865.

My dearest Margaret:—

Just after mailing you a letter last evening John arrived much worried and ready to sail for England, where his mother is very ill, about to undergo a surgical operation which may prove fatal.

I am grieved that my wedding day must be again indefinitely postponed, but knowing the longing for a mother's love I would not say one word which would make him feel that I would prevent him going to his dear mother in her suffering and trouble. On the contrary I urged him on, and this morning, with a smile on my lips and a nameless fear clutching at my heart, I bade him God speed as the ship set sail.

I can write no more dear, so good night.

Fond love from

Maraquita.

"LETTER 30."

Miss Isabelle Thorn to Lieut. Beech.

Paris, September 1865.

My dear Lieutenant:—

Please tender your mother my congratulations and best wishes for her speedy recovery.

Sincerely hoping the terrors of the English Channel and 'mal de mer' will not prevent your visiting gay Paris before your return to America,

I am with kind regards to you all,
Isabelle Thorn.

"LETTER 31."

Lieut. Beech to Miss Thorn.

London, September 1865.

My dear Miss Thorn:—

On behalf of mother and myself let me thank you for your kind wishes.

Mother is fully recovered and quite herself again, I am glad to report.

Do you think a terror of terrors could prevent me journeying to Paris when I read that you hope I will not be prevented from doing so? If you do I think you underrate your wishes or hopes.

Your wishes shall be my commands, hence I shall call on you on Thursday next.

Until then Adieu.

Most truly yours,

John Beech.

"LETTER 32."

Mrs. Thorne to Lieut. Grane.

Paris, November 1865.

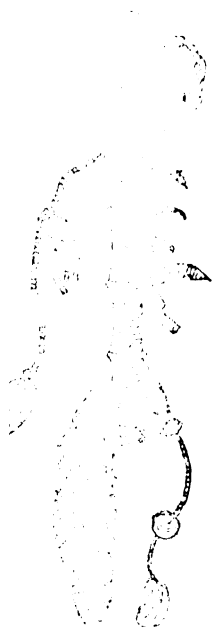
My dear Nephew:—

What has happened that I am no longer favored with your brief but welcome epistles?

Where is he? What is he doing?—are the questions I have asked myself repeatedly since I received the line announcing your safe arrival at New London in August, and asked only in vain.

Am also forsaken by my friend Maraquita Dane; have written her repeatedly but have not had a line in reply.

John Beech is in Paris, came early in September and was followed in about ten days by Ellen and her mother. We have met John at the Opera, in the Louvre,



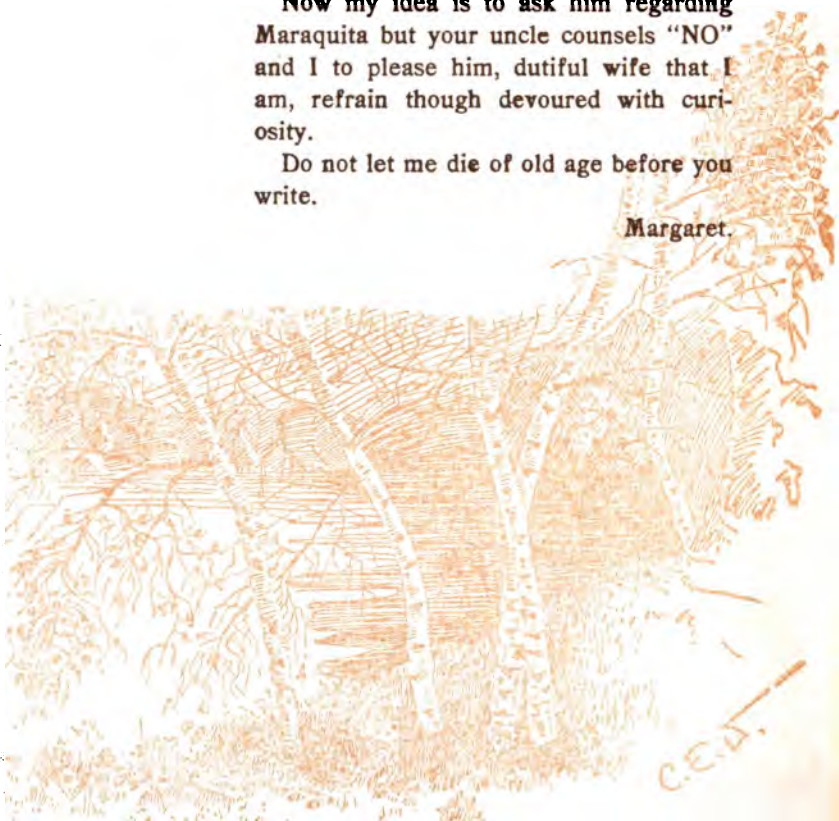
BLACKBIRD

on the Boulevards, in fact every place and always looking the joyous escort of Isabelle Thorn, our mutual cousin, in fact, to my mind, his look is altogether too joyous to bode well for Maraquita's future.

Now my idea is to ask him regarding Maraquita but your uncle counsels "NO" and I to please him, dutiful wife that I am, refrain though devoured with curiosity.

Do not let me die of old age before you write.

Margaret.



"LETTER 33."

Lieut. Grane to Mrs. Thorn.

New London, December 1865.

My dear Margaret:—

Where am I? What am I doing? I've been in Paradise. I have been devoting all my spare time during the days, and all the dreams of all the nights, to that angel Maraquita. Could I but change those dreams to substance, but alas, when I remember that John Beech is my friend, my dreams are bitter sweet.

Kind Providence in the guise of a portly old New York physician, has been the means of Mrs. Dane remaining at New London until a few days ago, when they started South for the remainder of the winter. In April I believe they intend visiting at Detroit some of Mrs. Dane's



BLACKBIRD

early friends, among them the old French gentleman whom rumor has it lives in his ancestral home on Jefferson Avenue—alone, because Mrs. Dane's bright eyes have been for forty years his dream of dreams. Poor old man.

Alas, I fear History will repeat itself in Mrs. Dane's family, and in the person of a poor soldier.

I asked Maraquita to favor me with a line occasionally, at which she demurred, fearing it would not be loyal to John. When she blushed I said to myself "always the joyous escort of Irabelle Thorn."

Mrs. Dane took pity on me and asked if the letters of an old woman would be of any use to a lonely soldier, and I am forever her debtor.

Taps sounded long ago, so good night.

Wishing you and Uncle the jolliest of Christmas joys.

John.



"LETTER 34."

Maraquita to Mrs. Thorn.

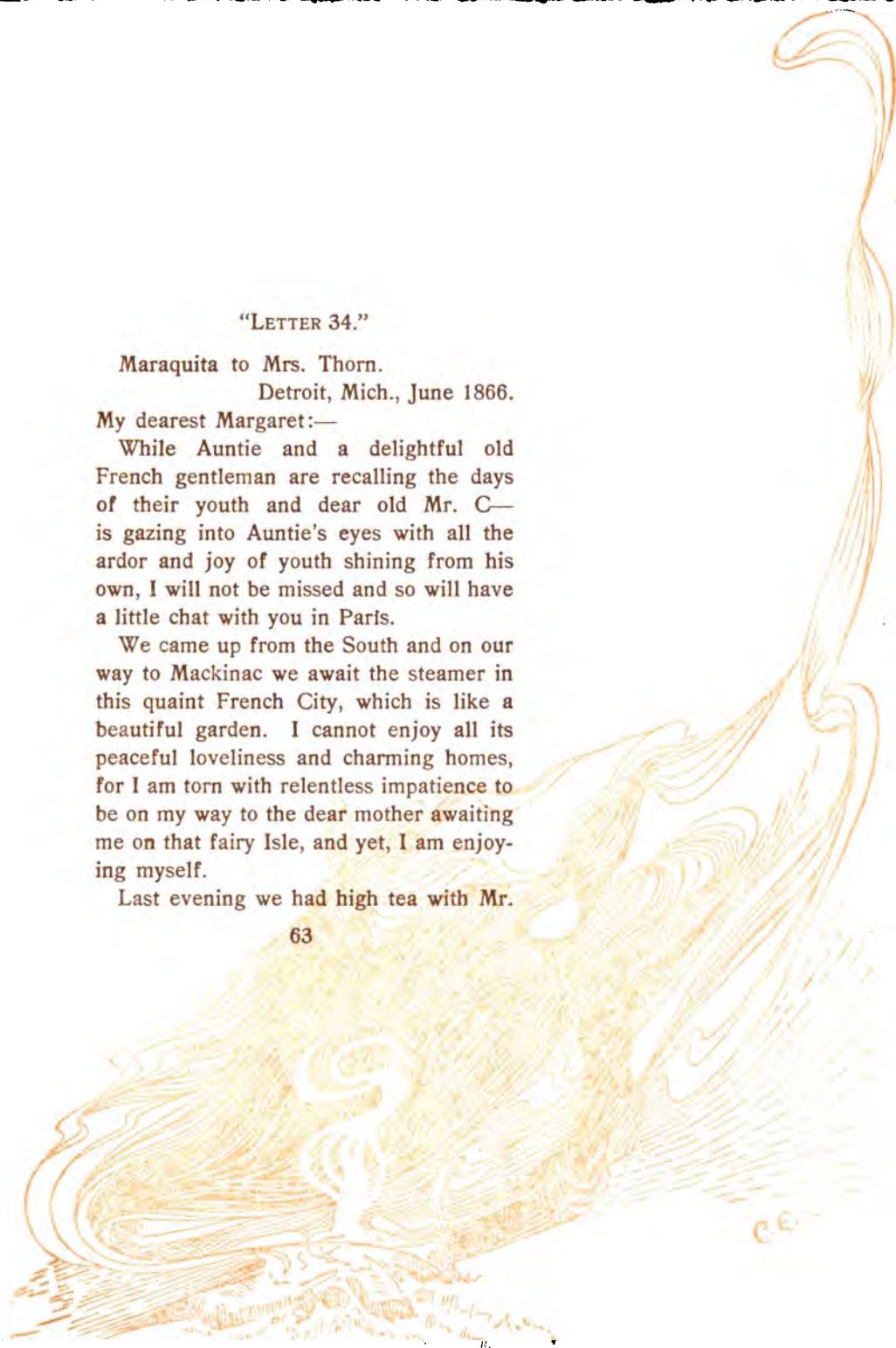
Detroit, Mich., June 1866.

My dearest Margaret:—

While Auntie and a delightful old French gentleman are recalling the days of their youth and dear old Mr. C— is gazing into Auntie's eyes with all the ardor and joy of youth shining from his own, I will not be missed and so will have a little chat with you in Paris.

We came up from the South and on our way to Mackinac we await the steamer in this quaint French City, which is like a beautiful garden. I cannot enjoy all its peaceful loveliness and charming homes, for I am torn with relentless impatience to be on my way to the dear mother awaiting me on that fairy Isle, and yet, I am enjoying myself.

Last evening we had high tea with Mr.





BLACKBIRD

C—, the dear old gentleman as his quaint residence on Jefferson Ave. Quaint is hardly the word. Were it not kept in such excellent order one might say antique, for I believe he and his father before him were born here in this broad house with the dormer windows. After tea we sat upon the small verandah which is right on the street; the servant placed a miniature model of the house upon a table near the curb; the model is an exact reproduction of the house, furniture and all, correct to the smallest detail. The candles were lighted in this tiny mansion; a couple of strolling Italians, a man with a harp and a boy violinist, picturesque in spite of their ragged dirtiness, stationed themselves beside it and played, now gay, now sad; while a number of small boys and girls gloated and wished they might snatch and make way with what seemed to them a perfect joy of a doll house.

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

Soon the children left one by one, the moon came shining over the business houses which surround this good old home. The music still droned on and on. Aunt and our host seemed lost in reverie, serene, peaceful smiles illumining their dear old faces; his hand stole into hers. Hélas Bien-amie,—I am a boy again romping through the dear old rooms—then a youth. Mon Père is giving a fête for me. On the stair descending art thou Chéri—all the wealth of my love is told—then there are the children, fair haired Anglais like thee 'Bien-aime' a tiny maid who bears thy name,—Je suis un Roi. The music ceases—the moon looks down through a mist.—Je suis sanges—a lonely old man—awaiting la finis. With a queer little sob Aunt bade him "Bon Soir" and we walked to our hotel but a few squares away. I looked back and through my tears saw him as he said, a lonely old man—a most pathetic



BLACKBIRD

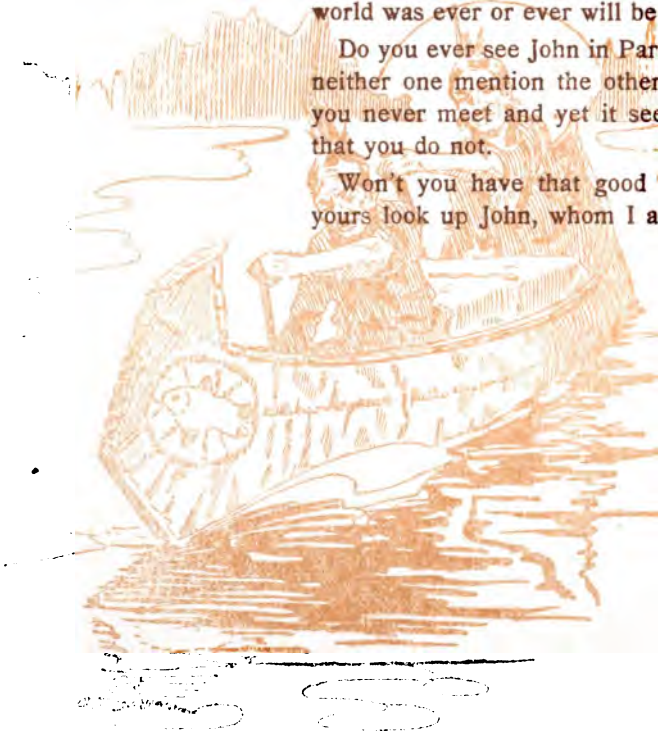
figure in the moonlight, and in my heart made a fervent prayer, if either John or I must in our old age be left, that John may not be the one to "await la finis."

John is still in Europe. Why, I do not know, for Ellen writes her mother is fully recovered. I suppose he has some very good reason for remaining, as I am sure he is anxiously looking forward to meeting my parents.

You fortunate creature who have always known a mother's tender care, can you picture my joy as the time draws nearer when I shall see, know and love my timid little mother? No mother in all the wide, wide world was ever or ever will be so loved.

Do you ever see John in Paris? As you neither one mention the other I presume you never meet and yet it seems strange that you do not.

Won't you have that good husband of yours look up John, whom I am sure will



A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

be glad to know any friend of mine.

Do, dearest, just to please,

Affectionately yours,

Maraqita.





"LETTER 35."

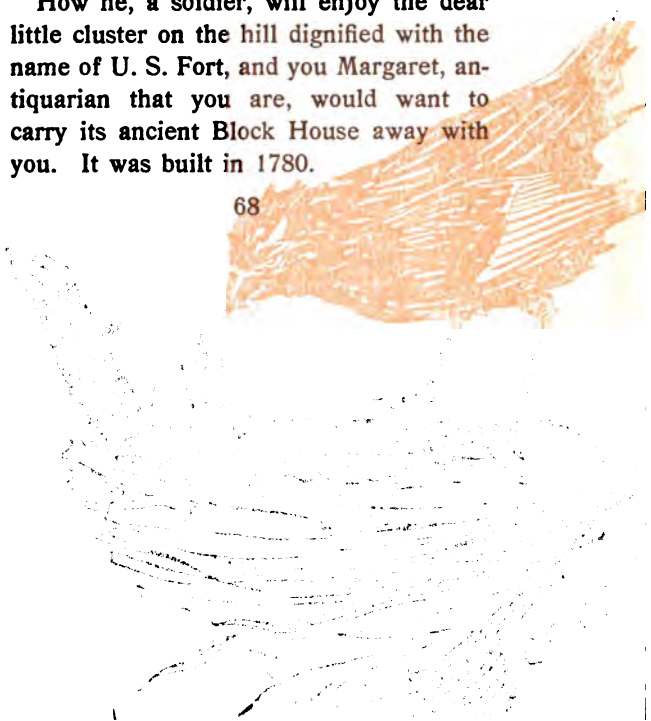
Maraquita to Mrs. Thorn.

Mackinac Island, August 1866.

My dear Margaret:—

Would that you were with me to roam through this delightful Fairy Island and visit with me its wondrous arched rock, which tradition says was the doorway of the "Gitchie Manitou" when he dwelt on this mystic Island; there is much traditional lore connected with the Island. I am learning the many paths to various points of interest and dreaming of the joy of showing them to John and weaving wondrous romances for him.

How he, a soldier, will enjoy the dear little cluster on the hill dignified with the name of U. S. Fort, and you Margaret, antiquarian that you are, would want to carry its ancient Block House away with you. It was built in 1780.

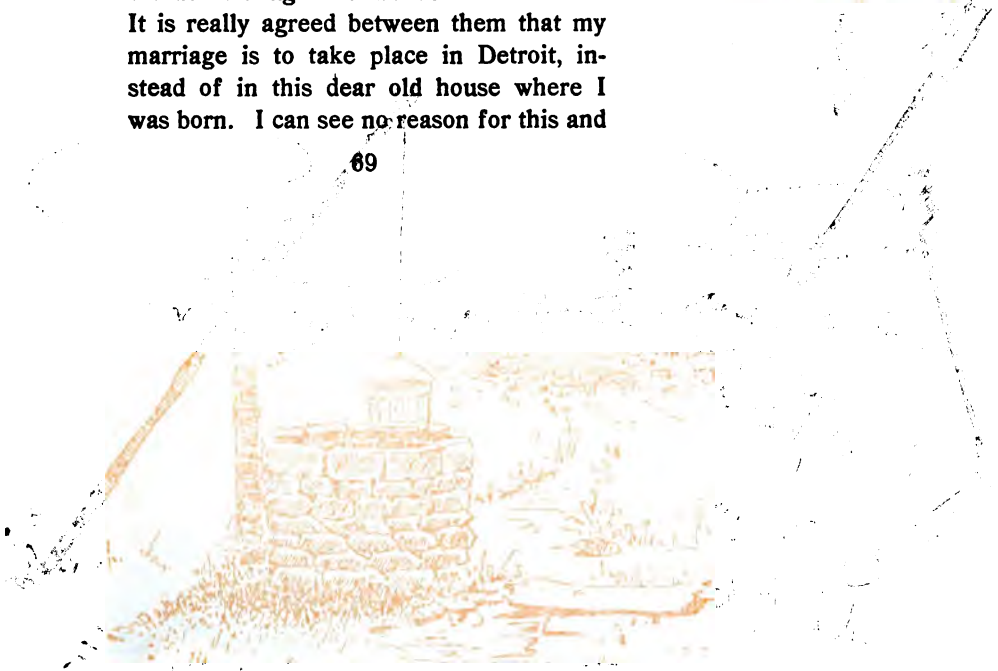


A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

My home is a long white house looking over the water and but a stone's throw from the Mission House, now a fashionable Hotel, but one time an Indian school. My mother I have not seen, as Aunt did not let me notify Father when we would arrive, wishing to surprise them. She accomplished it so well that my mother is north of here on the mainland to remain until September.

The Island is but a speck upon these Inland seas, being little over eight miles around and about three across. There is a tiny village nestling at the foot of the bluff which is crowned by the Fort, the inhabitants are mostly French and Irish.

Aunt is looking well. She and father wander through the woods like children. It is really agreed between them that my marriage is to take place in Detroit, instead of in this dear old house where I was born. I can see no reason for this and





BLACKBIRD

they do not offer one; possibly I may learn why, before I write you again. Until then with fondest love,

Adieu.

Maraquita.

P. S. I have opened this to tell you that I have just received a letter from John saying he will be compelled to remain in Paris until January.



"LETTER 36."

Grane to Mrs. Thorn.

New York, September 1866.

My dear Margaret:—

Am in New York enroute, where do you suppose? For Fort Mackinac where we are to be stationed.

My emotions are conflicting. Mackinac means to me Paradise and torture as you can realize.

I understand Beech is still in France and wonder why. Do you know?

Our stay here is short. We arrived at four p. m. and leave at six by rail to Buffalo, thence by steamer to Mackinac, from where I will write you again. Regards and respects to you and Uncle.

John.





"LETTER 37."

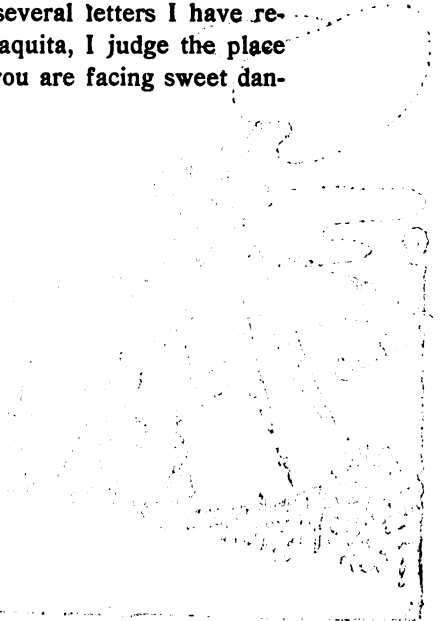
Mrs. Thorn to John Grane.

Paris, November 1866.

My dear Nephew:—

Your September letter reached me some weeks ago and though I have been with you in thought many times your Uncle has been ailing and every moment has been devoted to him. He is now, I am thankful to be able to report, very well and strong, even thinking of going to New York, but which I feel certain he will not do before Spring.

So you are at Mackinac Island, and have no doubt seen the adorable object of your misplaced affections, as I know she is there and from several letters I have received from Maraquita, I judge the place is so small that you are facing sweet dan-





A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

ger in meetings which cannot very well be avoided in so small a spot.

I would not avoid the meeting, John, for John Beech, according to all appearances, is quite willing to stay in France. You ask why? The why is Isabelle Thorn. Had I the wand of a fairy Godmother to wave o'er your fairy Isle, you should be the Prince and Maraquita 'Cinderella.' Eh bien, I have no fairy wand and can only pray for the consummation of my dreams. May you realize them all, and be happy, dear boy, is the fondest wish of,

Aunt Margaret.



"LETTER 38."

Grane to Mrs. Thorn.

Mackinac, May 1867.

My dear Aunt:—

With the opening of navigation came your letter of November for, after snow flies and ice makes we are cut off from all the outside world in this fairy land, the mail arriving irregularly and more often not at all.

The winter has been sublime, ice as far as the eye could see and snow everywhere.

On moonlight nights we rode or rather slid down the steep hill to the West of our quarters, down the hill and far out on the icy lake glistening in the moonlight, and afterwards we were regaled by the good ladies with a hearty luncheon. Little Mrs. B., our Surgeon's wife, can steer the sleigh better than any of the ladies, and some of the men for that matter.

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

I have spent several delightful evenings with your friend Maraquita. Her Aunt left in the Fall, and she is alone with her parents and the great dog which is often her companion on solitary tramps. She seems sad and lonely; how she can be otherwise I do not know, when I compare her past surroundings with the present.

On one of our moonlight nights, I asked permission of the garrison ladies to bring her to slide with us, and was answered with horror and reproach, that I should think of contaminating the irreproachable society of the post by introducing an Islander into its upper circles. That may do for a private, but we of the upper ten! Oh dear me, no.

Miss Maraquita tells me her wedding is set for late June and here, much against her father's and Aunt's wishes, they preferring Detroit. Beech will arrive a day



BLACKBIRD

or two before, and I have applied for a furlough to commence a day or two previous.

Where I shall go I cannot say, travel or distance seem useless when one has a memory which will insist on going the same journey. I can say no more.

John.

"LETTER 39."

John Grane to Mrs. Thorn.

Mackinac Island, August 1867.

My dear Margaret:—

My furlough commenced June 26th and I reported for duty August 1st five days ago.

Today I learned that Beech has come and gone. No wedding. Maraquita still here. Do you know why?

John.



Handwritten text, possibly a signature or address, written in cursive script.

"LETTER 40."

Post card, Mrs. Thorn to John Grane.

New York, August 1867.

**Just arrived, letter received. If you
know particulars, write.**

Margaret.

"LETTER 41."

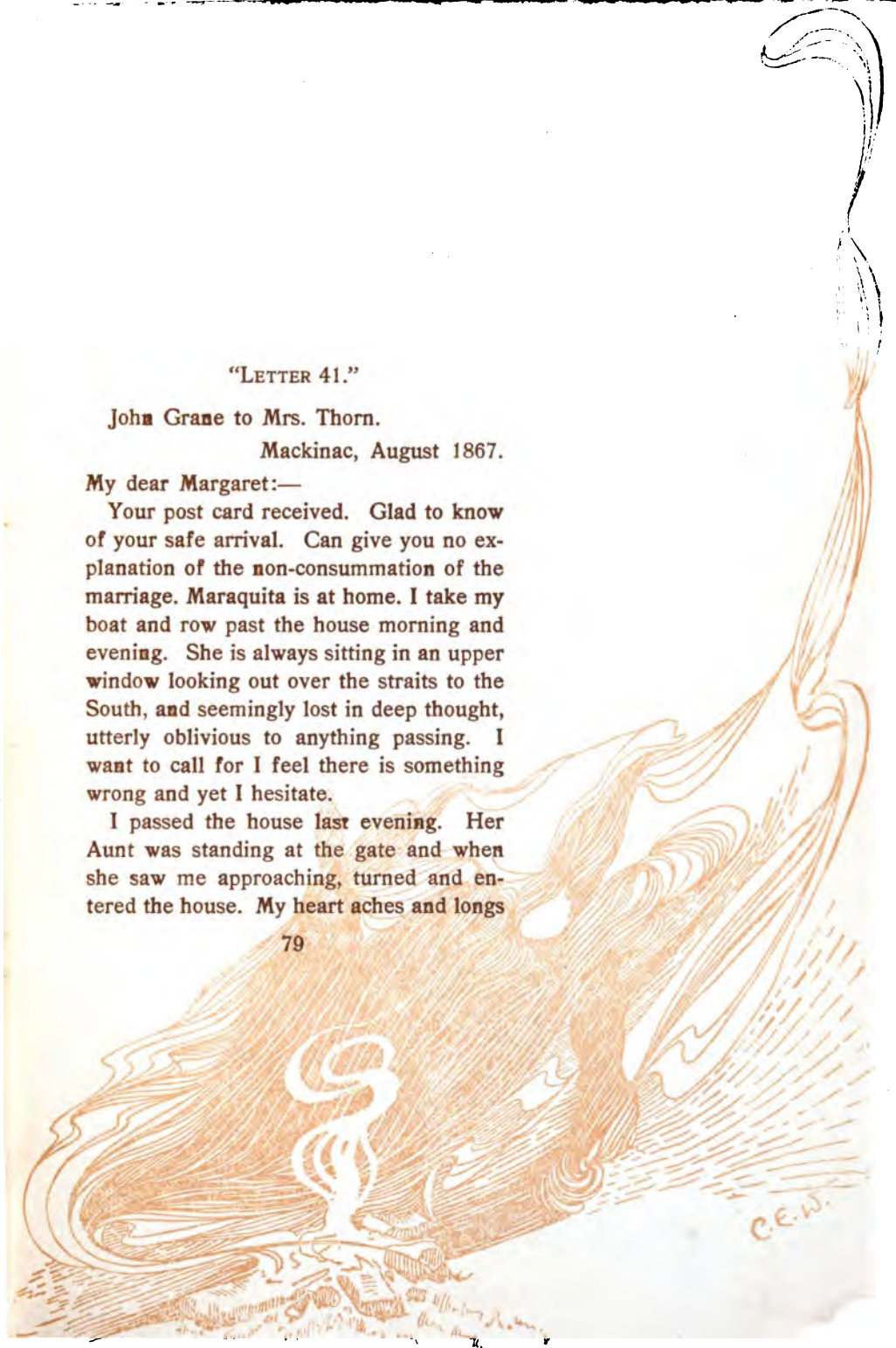
John Grane to Mrs. Thorn.

Mackinac, August 1867.

My dear Margaret:—

Your post card received. Glad to know of your safe arrival. Can give you no explanation of the non-consummation of the marriage. Maraquita is at home. I take my boat and row past the house morning and evening. She is always sitting in an upper window looking out over the straits to the South, and seemingly lost in deep thought, utterly oblivious to anything passing. I want to call for I feel there is something wrong and yet I hesitate.

I passed the house last evening. Her Aunt was standing at the gate and when she saw me approaching, turned and entered the house. My heart aches and longs



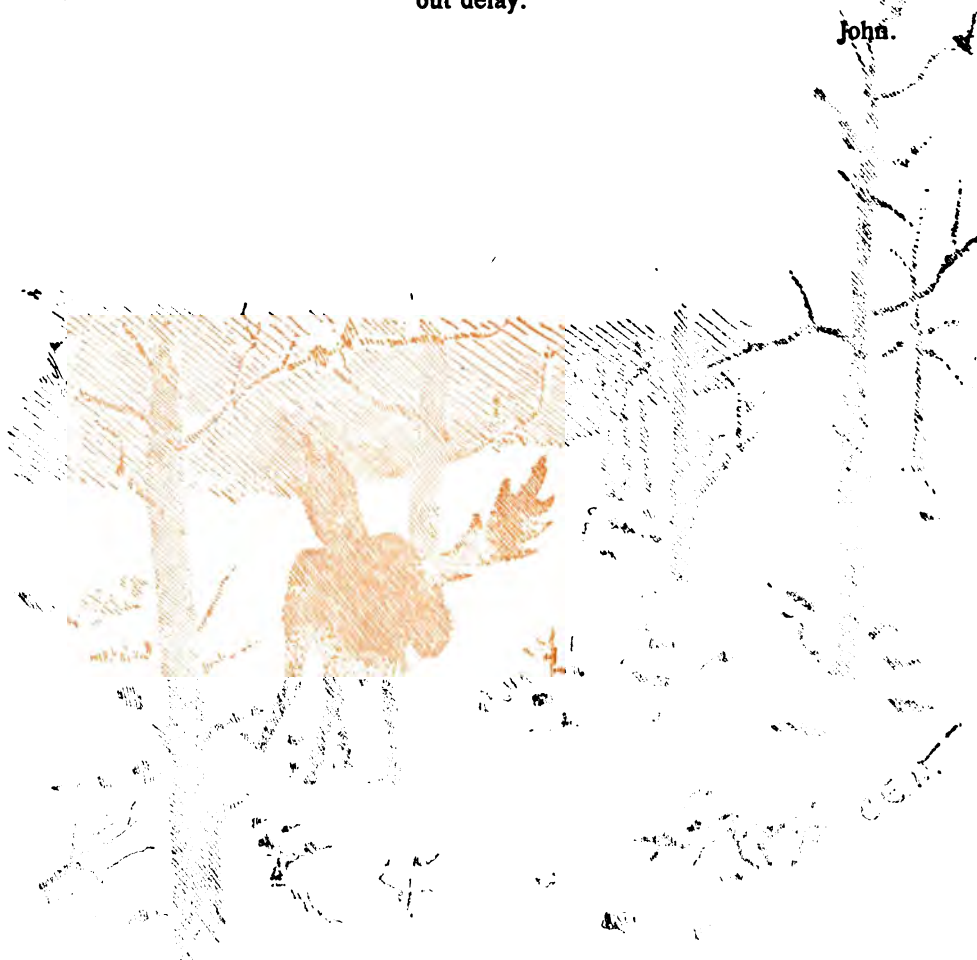


BLACKBIRD

to help them bear this grief, whatever it may be, but I fear to intrude.

Sometimes one must go from home to hear the news and it may be that you will learn what the trouble and grief is in which this poor child is plunged. If you know and I may go to her, wire me without delay.

John.





"LETTER 42."

Mrs. Thorn to John Grane.

New York, September 1867.

My dear Nephew:—

Almost mad with impatience I have looked and looked for a line from you and looked in vain. Why do you not write, provoking creature, when you know I am anxiously awaiting news of Maraquita. Where is she? Why did she not marry Beech?

I met Ellen Beech in Arnold Constable's yesterday and asked when she returned to town and was told the day before, then occurred the following conversation:

I asked:—

"Was Maraquita a pretty bride?"

She:—"I do not understand."

I:—"Were you not at your brother's



BLACKBIRD

wedding June 28th?"

She:—"You are laboring under some misunderstanding. My brother was not married."

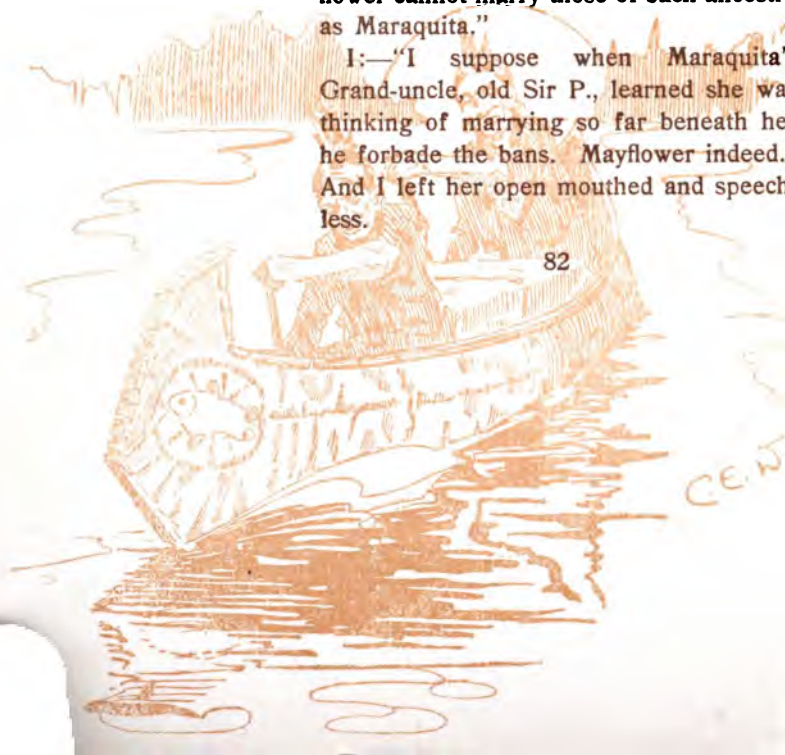
I:—"Well, why wasn't he?"

She:—"Well, why should he marry?"

I:—"Because he was engaged to a charming girl and you know it, and know he was to marry on June 28th last."

She:—"I suppose you are thinking of his flirtation with Maraquita D. There could be no thought of marrying between my brother and Maraquita. Men whose ancestors came to this country in the Mayflower cannot marry those of such ancestry as Maraquita."

I:—"I suppose when Maraquita's Grand-uncle, old Sir P., learned she was thinking of marrying so far beneath her he forbade the bans. Mayflower indeed." And I left her open mouthed and speechless.





A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

This afternoon your Uncle drove down Fifth Avenue and met a cab loaded with steamer trunks and in the cab Mrs. Thorn and Isabelle. I happen to know that John Beech is in town. I will give him time to call and then I will call. If Isabelle knows why there was no marriage I will know it and so shall you as quickly as the mail can get to you.

With much affection,
Margaret.



"LETTER 43."

Post card, Mrs. Thorn to John Grane.

New York, October 1867.

Last letter August 15th. Are you ill?

Answer.

Margaret.



"LETTER 44."

John Grane to Mrs. Thorn.

Mackinac, October 1867.

**Have been ill. Complete recovery.
Will write soon.**

John.





"LETTER 45."

Grane to Mrs. Thorn.

October 1867.

My dear Margaret:—

Forgive me for causing you any anxiety. Just after writing you in August an epidemic of fever broke out in the village, something which was never known before, as this is an unusually healthy spot and clime but in this epidemic many were carried off.

The post surgeon was untiring in his efforts to give relief and I was retained to assist him. In the midst of our work I was seized with the fever, and have not yet left my quarters.

I learned today that Maraquita's parents were victims of the fever and that her Aunt had taken her away, no person can



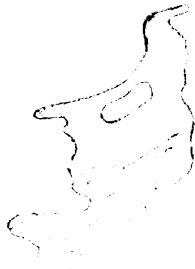
A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

say where. It is said, Maraquita gave the house and all its contents to the servant, saying that she (Maraquita) would never return to the Island.

If they are in New York wire me please, for I cannot be ice bound here and—well what am I saying—my existence is nothing to her.

Write a lonely soldier when you can.

John.





"LETTER 46."

Extract from New York Herald.

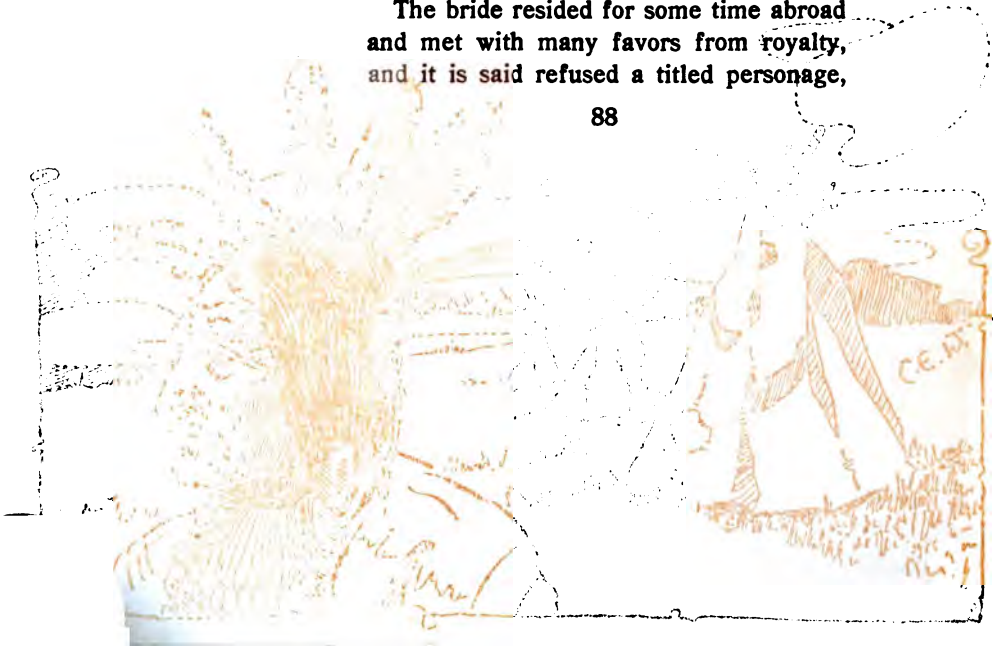
October 1867.

"At Trinity Church yesterday, a large and fashionable throng of New York and Boston society witnessed the marriage of Miss Isabelle, the beautiful daughter of Mrs. and the late Millionaire Lewis Thorn, to John Beech of Boston, late Lieutenant U. S. A.

The bride was perfect in a gown of white satin garnitured with orange blossoms and completely enveloped in a veil of real Duchesse, an heirloom.

The bridesmaid was Miss Ellen Beech of Boston.

The bride resided for some time abroad and met with many favors from royalty, and it is said refused a titled personage,





A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

preferring the love of a U. S. soldier who has long been devoted to her.

Mr. and Mrs. Beech sailed immediately after the ceremony for Italy, where the honeymoon will be spent. On their return to America in the Spring, they will reside in Boston, the home of the Beeches since the first John Beech arrived on the Mayflower."



"LETTER 47."

Mrs. Thorn to John Grane.

New York, October 1867.

My dear Nephew:—

Have you heard of or from Maraquita? I have inquired of every person here who knew her, only to learn that no person is cognizant of her present address. She has not written me a line since a few days before Lieut. Beech reached Mackinac, and I know whatever caused the breaking of the engagement occurred after he reached the Island.

Your Uncle interrupted just here to ask me to read an article in the morning paper, a notice of the marriage of John Beech and Isabelle Thorn. I am not surprised, and I think now that he jilted Maraquita, poor child, and yet probably it is

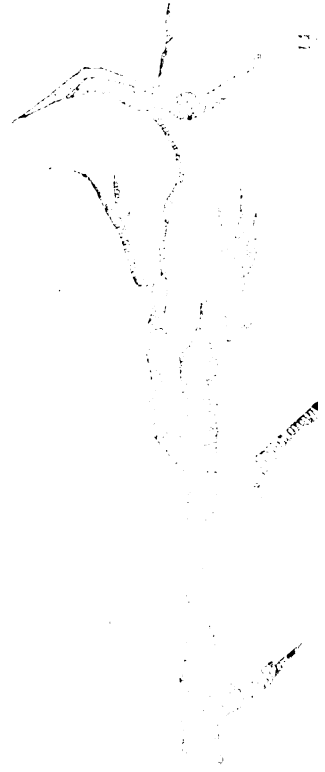
A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

as well, for I know you love her and if you can persuade her to accept you, you will make her far happier than Beech ever could or would.

I have always thought him a heartless dandy, now I am positive of it.

If you love me let me hear from you soon.

Margaret.





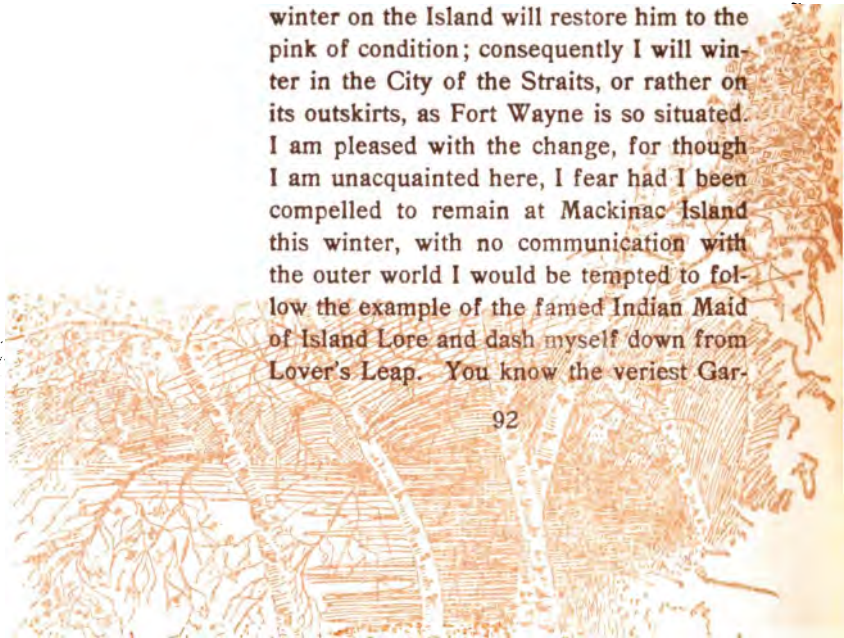
"LETTER 48."

Grane to Mrs. Thorn.

Fort Wayne, Detroit, Nov. '67.

My dear Margaret:—

Just after receiving your letter, Lieut. Frank Planders and I were exchanged, his health has been poor and it is calculated a winter on the Island will restore him to the pink of condition; consequently I will winter in the City of the Straits, or rather on its outskirts, as Fort Wayne is so situated. I am pleased with the change, for though I am unacquainted here, I fear had I been compelled to remain at Mackinac Island this winter, with no communication with the outer world I would be tempted to follow the example of the famed Indian Maid of Island Lore and dash myself down from Lover's Leap. You know the veriest Gar-



Count



A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

den of Eden without those we love, is not Eden but Sahara, and so while Mackinac was Paradise last winter it would be to me the most desolate place on the globe now.

Yesterday was Thanksgiving. I dined with the Colonel "en famille" and spent a pleasant evening. His daughter Jessamine is a clever young woman and excellent pianist. After the holidays she is to enter a New York school for a short time before going abroad to study at Leipsic.

No news of Maraquita or her present residence. The steamer's purser told me they disembarked here but I cannot find trace of them having registered at any of the hotels. Possibly they went by train to New York and may even now be with you.

Your extract from the "Herald" did not surprise me, and yet it did, for though I never expected to see John Beech marry Maraquita, I never expected him to marry



BLACKBIRD

any other woman; always thought him too changeable to settle his affections and keep them centered long enough to reach the altar.

It seems you were not favored with an invitation to this fashionable affair. No more was I, though I was desired as best man when he was to marry Maraquita. Possibly I was objectionable to my lady Isabelle but I cannot imagine why you or Uncle should be slighted. Can you?

Well, my dear Aunt, this is a most lengthy and I am sure to you, a most wearisome epistle, so Au Revoir.

John.



"LETTER 49."

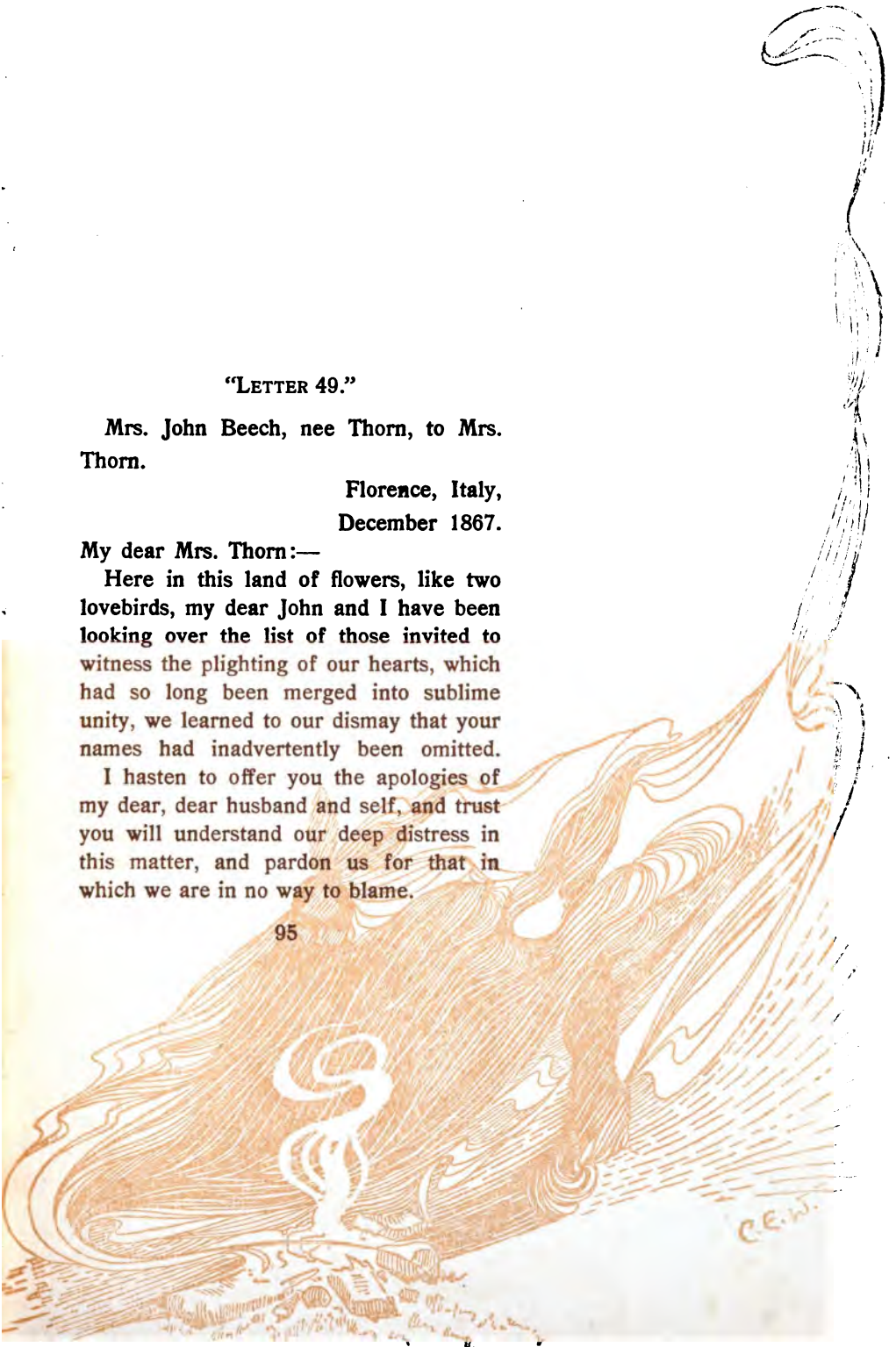
Mrs. John Beech, nee Thorn, to Mrs.
Thorn.

Florence, Italy,
December 1867.

My dear Mrs. Thorn:—

Here in this land of flowers, like two
lovebirds, my dear John and I have been
looking over the list of those invited to
witness the plighting of our hearts, which
had so long been merged into sublime
unity, we learned to our dismay that your
names had inadvertently been omitted.

I hasten to offer you the apologies of
my dear, dear husband and self, and trust
you will understand our deep distress in
this matter, and pardon us for that in
which we are in no way to blame.



C.E.W.

BLACKBIRD

You will forgive me for not writing more. Had I the time I would, but every moment taken from him is jealously begrudged by my precious love in this wondrous clime where we live only to love.

My compliments to you and Mr. Thorn.

Sincerely amid perfect love,

Isabelle Thorn Beech.

P. S. How is your charming friend Miss Maraquita Dane?

"LETTER 50."

Mrs. Thorn to Mrs. Beech.

New York, January 1868.

My dear Mrs. Beech:—

Your letter of December received but yesterday. I am glad in a way that you thought of apologizing, for had it not been for this letter we would have remained in ignorance of your marriage.

I suppose you have written the same apology to my nephew, John Grane, for no doubt the same reason, as I feel confident it exists.

So you find the climate of Italy wondrous. I am told Utah's climate is wondrous and to some men most agreeable, as by an additional marriage ceremony (which need not be invitational) they may enjoy love as well as acquire money.

BLACKBIRD

As to your postscript let me ask you a question before answering yours. "Why does a woman put the all important part of her letter in a postscript?" Now to answer your question, my charming friend Miss Dane is beautiful beyond compare and growing more so every day. At present she is being eagerly pursued by a royal personage travelling here incog. But I hold her far too good for even a Prince; it is so rarely that beauty and honor are combined in one.

Sincerely and with perfect understanding,

Margaret Thorn.

"LETTER 51."

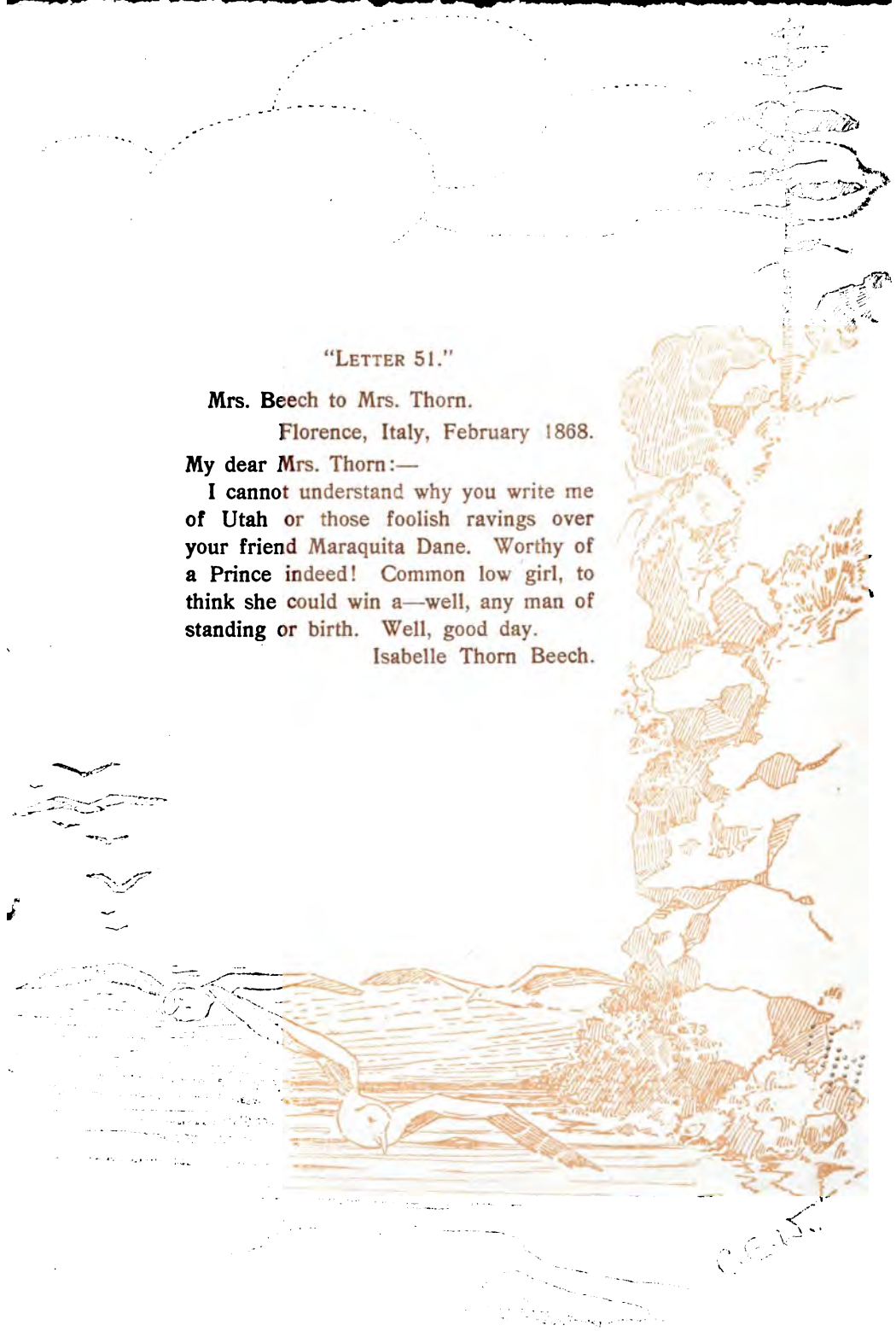
Mrs. Beech to Mrs. Thorn.

Florence, Italy, February 1868.

My dear Mrs. Thorn:—

I cannot understand why you write me of Utah or those foolish ravings over your friend Maraquita Dane. Worthy of a Prince indeed! Common low girl, to think she could win a—well, any man of standing or birth. Well, good day.

Isabelle Thorn Beech.



REV.



"LETTER 52."

Mrs. Thorn to Mrs. Beech.

New York, March 1868.

My dear Mrs. Beech:—

In reply to your letter or note or effusion or what?

Don't be catty; people who know will think you are jealous. My charming friend is on the ocean bound for Italy. May you meet is the wish of

Margaret Thorn.

"LETTER 53."

Lieut. Grane to Mrs. Thorn.
Fort Wayne, Detroit.
March 1868.

My dear Margaret:—

At last I have found Maraquita only to lose her. I hear you ask how.

It was thus, the Colonel asked me to drive his daughter to the Biddle House, a City Hotel, where she wished to call on a friend who had been a pupil at the school she intended entering in New York. Splendid sleighing, the Colonel's trotters and the companionship of a charming young lady were not to be disdained, so we started.

Arrived at the Biddle. I waited and waited in the sleigh until I grew restless and placing the team in charge of the



BLACKBIRD

porter, entered the Hotel office. While I was stamping around and wondering what women found to talk about, a handsome old fashioned sleigh drawn by a team of greys, the finest I had ever seen, drew rein at the door, and an old gentleman alighted going to the desk requested the clerk to say to Mrs. and Miss Dane that Mr. C— awaited them. I cannot describe to you my feelings, nor how raging in mad tumult within, I calmly walked out and stood at the ladies' entrance. I had not been there long when out came Maraquita with her Aunt and the Colonel's daughter. We met and parted almost at once. On the return drive I opened my heart to the Colonel's daughter who promised me her assistance in obtaining an interview alone with Maraquita, an interview for which I feared to ask but which she brought about in this way. Colonel and Mrs. C— went to town, Mrs. C—



A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

must spend the day and requested Maraquita to go to the Fort to pass the day with Jessamine, the Colonel to bring both the girls into town for supper at the Biddle. During the afternoon Jessamine, clever girl, was suddenly seized with earache, the Colonel could not leave her. I drove Maraquita to the city. On the way I told my love and begged her not to answer then but allow me to call on her the next morning. The next morning I received this note.

My dear Lieutenant:—

What you ask can never be. I respect and cannot so wrong you.

Truly Yours,

Maraquita Dane.

I was desperate and rushed to the city, only to learn they had left the hotel, going no person knew where, not East, for the train had gone before they left the Biddle.

103



BLACKBIRD

Old Mr. C— I am confident knows where they are. All this happened a month ago. Three days ago I called on him; asked for the address of Mrs. Dane; After looking at me steadily for several minutes he shrugged his shoulders and said "Helas! I have been once young—I have loved once—always—without hope—the young soldier has my sympathy—mais alor! I am a gentleman and must sacredly guard a lady's secret." He rang the bell for his servant, made me a courtly bow and bade me Adieu.

I can write you no more, but if you wish an humble slave ever at your command, find my love for me and that slave I shall be.

Your devoted,

John.

LETTER "54."

Jessamine C— (the Colonel's daughter)
to Lieut. Grane.

Fort Wayne, May 1871.

My dear Lieutenant:—

In the midst of our spring house cleaning I pause to send you a clipping from an old Detroit Free Press which I am sure you must have overlooked.

Do you suppose the poor child Maraquita is in Europe alone?

Yours,

Jessamine C.



"LETTER 55."

Extract from Detroit Free Press.

December 1870.

DANE—At London, England, November 10th, 1870, in the fifty-eighth year of her age, Arabella Dane, only daughter of the late Sir Reginald Dane of Surrey, and relict of James Dane, late of New York.

R. I. P.

"LETTER 56."

Grane to Miss Jessamine C—.

Mackinac Island, May 1871.

My dear Miss Jessamine:—

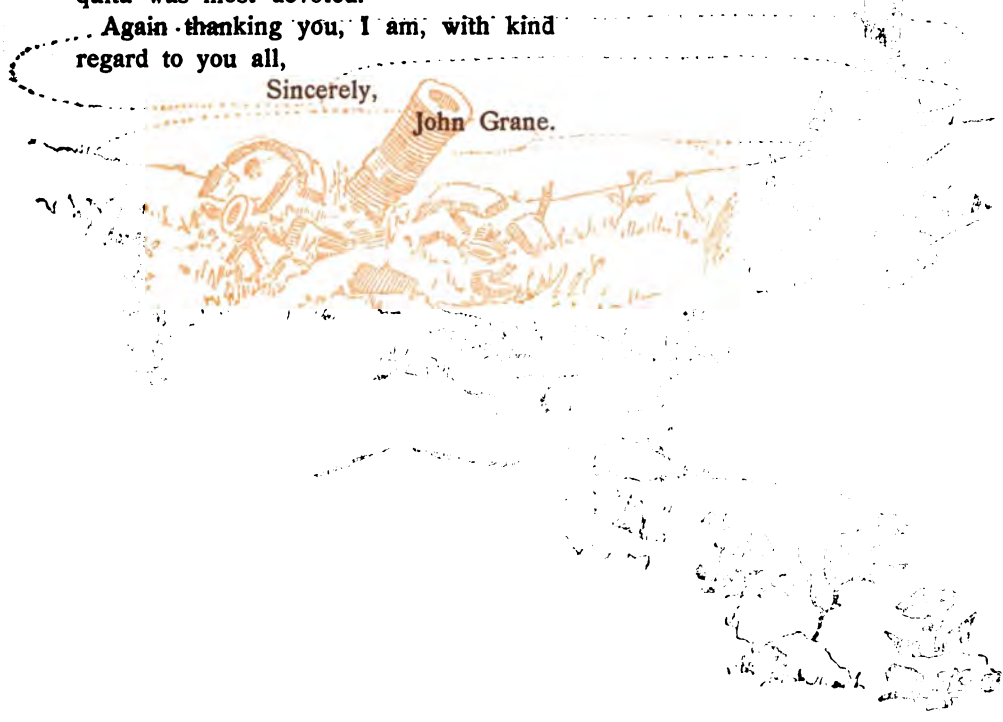
Your great kindness in sending me the notice of Mrs. Dane's death is much appreciated.

I have not heard from or of Miss Maraquita since I met her in Detroit, over two years ago, nor has my Aunt, Mrs. Thorn to whom you will remember Miss Maraquita was most devoted.

Again thanking you, I am, with kind regard to you all,

Sincerely,

John Grane.



"LETTER 57."

John Grane to Mrs. Thorn.

Paris, June 1878.

My dear Margaret:—

To-day as I left my Hotel on the way to the Ambassador's office on special business which brought me to France, I saw a lady entering an Hotel across the way, accompanied by two beautiful children, girls, aged about three and six years and followed by a small retinue of servants. I caught the lady's eye, a nervous start on her part, and I was sure it was Maraquita—Maraquita after all these years of inquiry and watching. At first I was tempted to dash across the way and greet her but the presence of the two children so unlike her and yet evidently hers made me pause, then the great importance of punctuality in the performance of my task hurried me on.

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

It was evening before I was again at liberty. Donning my evening clothes, I crossed to pay my respects and only remembered when I entered the Hotel that I did not know her name. I asked for the American lady who arrived that morning and was told with many shrugs and si vous plaits, pardons, etc., that there were no American arrivals. After some delay I cleared the situation by saying the American lady who arrived this morning accompanied by two beautiful children, a nurse, two maids and a courier. Pardon Monsieur (more shrugs—Why do these Frenchmen talk with eyebrows and shoulders)—means Madame la Comtesse. Madame is Danish and is accompanied by her beautiful children, tres jeune demoiselle. Madame la Comtesse remained but a few hours and has gone I know not where.

I enquired all over Paris without success and returned doubly dejected when I re-



BLACKBIRD

membered—Madame la Comtesse. If Maraquita had been lost to me before she is now more than lost as Madame la Comtesse. To find her would avail me nothing.

The hour is growing late even for Paris, so I will say Bon Soir.

Yours,

John.

"LETTER 58."

Jessamine C— (the Colonel's daughter)
to John Grane, Ex-Lieutenant U. S. A.

London, July 1888.

My dear Lieutenant:—

So I must address you, though retired, as any other form would not seem just right to me. Of course you are wondering why I am writing you. Well, to-day was the Birthday of our great and wondrous Country and we Americans were invited to a garden party at the American Ambassador's villa on the Thames.

Among the guests were Ex-Captain and Mrs. Beech. You are aware she is a great beauty or rather has been, and is now the faded rose with the perfect beauty pose which she never forgets, but in spite of all the pose she has a most unhappy expression.



BLACKBIRD

Our hostess had told us she expected the Baroness Von K—, widow of a German Baron but herself an American and a most beautiful woman. Soon the Baroness arrived accompanied by her daughter, a lovely blonde girl of sixteen. When they entered the garden I was chatting with Captain Beech. I glanced at the Baroness and thought her strangely familiar. My thoughts were interrupted by an exclamation from Captain Beech which sounded like "Maraquita;" then I understood why she seemed familiar to me and I was about to hasten over to her when she turned and came to me so quickly that I had not time to move. Grasping my hands she shook them warmly and said "Ah, Miss Jessamine, can I claim a little corner in your memory for Maraquita Dane and the happy hours passed with you in old Detroit. How many changes have come and gone since then, the loss of my dear Aunt has



A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

been to me the one sad memory of that time. But to see you is joy indeed." The irrepressible Mrs. Beech had come up during our speech and pressed forward to say "My dear Maraquita;" Maraquita interrupted with,

"You seem to be one who knows me well and yet, chagrin me as it does, I must admit I cannot place you."

"I am Mrs. Beech."

"Not the mother of my old school friend Ellen?"

"Hardly, since Ellen is several years my senior and is my sister-in-law. I am Mrs. Beech, she that was Isabelle Thorn."

Maraquita replied with feigned astonishment, well feigned indeed: "Impossible. Are you ill, you are so changed. So sad, so—ah—pardon that my astonishment makes me rude."

Captain Beech then claimed her attention. She greeted him joyously. Then

BLACKBIRD

calling her daughter said:—"Elsa, here is Captain Beech who can tell you much of the war of which you are always asking and of the American Indian in whom Maraquita is so interested. (Maraquita is my small daughter) the image of Elsa but three years younger. I would be overjoyed to have you tell her of the Indians. I understand you have shown much bravery among them." "But alas we are on our way to our home else I should ask you to bring your children," he interrupted, "I am childless, Maraquita."

"Poor Captain, then you must indeed cherish your wife; she is so triste, so like a drooping flower."

Our hostess claimed her and they went toward the refreshment booth.

I never heard of Captain Beech showing any bravery or fighting Indians but I am sure he could not have suffered more had he been scalped than he did during

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

this meeting.

I once was told a soldier broke Maraquita's heart. It seemed to me I had found the soldier, but his was the broken heart and Maraquita the personification of everlasting youth.

Pardon my long letter. I had promised to let you know if ever I met Maraquita and could not omit this conversation. It impressed me.

Sincerely,

Jessamine.





LETTER "59."

Maraquita to Margaret.

Mackinac Island, Oct. 1901.

My dear Margaret:—

A long dreary lapse of years since last we met—since last I wrote you a silence which should even now remain unbroken, could I in justice remain silent but I cannot in some matters, for they must be explained to two who are dear to me and you alone will I trust to approach these loving hearts. You will not refuse me I know, for when this reaches you there will be of Maraquita, who through all the silent years has loved you, but a memory, for I have returned to my Island home to die, to die of an insidious disease which is slowly yet surely creeping over me.

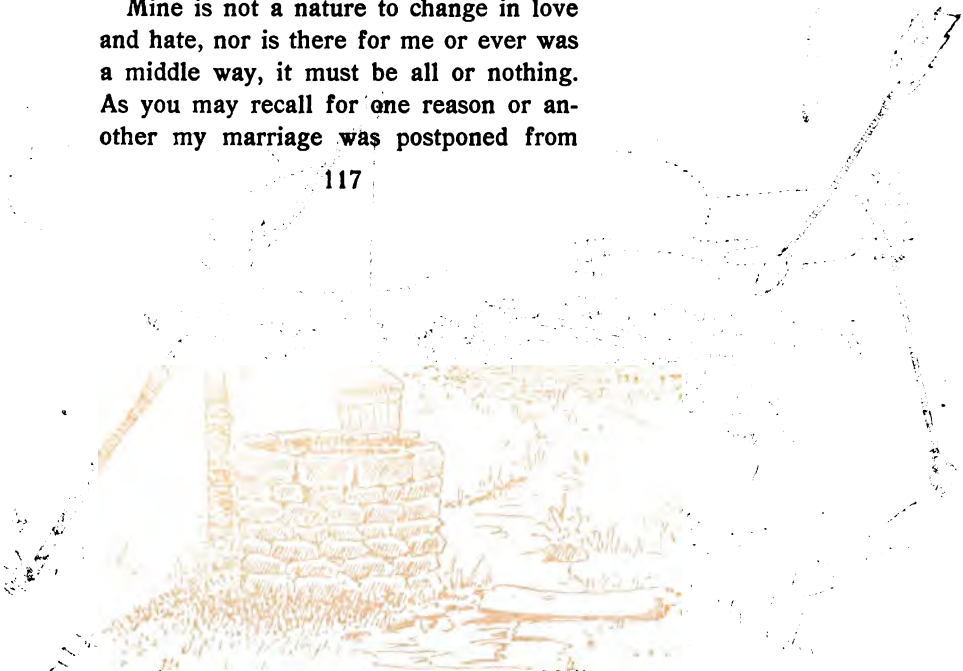
To many an apology for my long years

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

of silence would be necessary but not to you, dearest Margaret, for you who loved and understood me so well in the past, will, I am certain, after you have read the story of my dreary years appreciate and understand that silence was for me the only refuge, and, that you may understand, we will go back to the day I started for this beautiful Island or back further still to my engagement with Lieutenant Beech.

If you remember the things I said and wrote you of him you will remember the depth of my love for him, a love which, though I grieve to say it, is still after the lapse of years as firm and passionately true as on that day on which I first told you of it.

Mine is not a nature to change in love and hate, nor is there for me or ever was a middle way, it must be all or nothing. As you may recall for one reason or another my marriage was postponed from





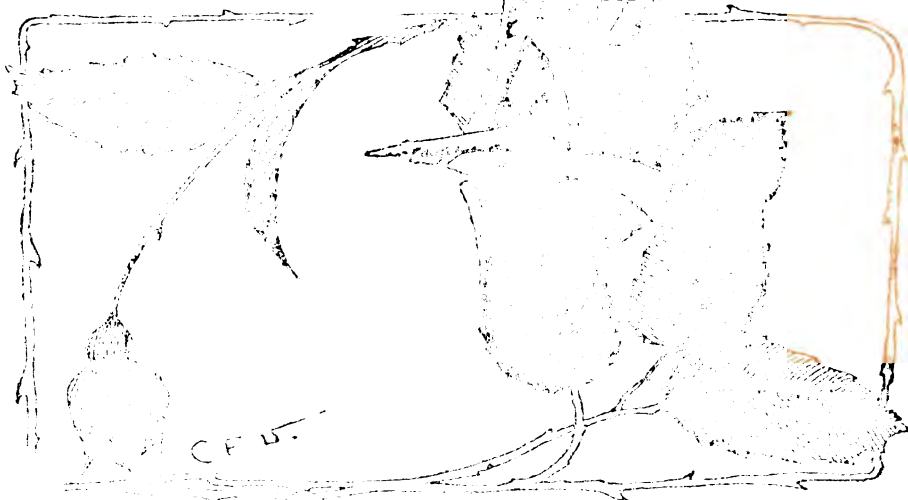
BLACKBIRD

time to time until at last there seemed no other obstacle left to interfere and the date was set, the only ripple remaining being my Aunt's desire that the ceremony should take place at Detroit or New York and my firm resolve that the Island where I was born and where the mother whom I could not remember was awaiting me, was the only place I could or would choose for the important scene of my life.

After much discussion Aunt Dane and I started for Mackinac, my trousseau all finished, my wedding gown and veil in its own especial chest.

After a delightful sail of several days I was awakened by Aunt Dane early one morning calling to me that the Island was in view. I have never forgotten the first glimpse of my birth-place.

I have seen Italy's sky but never have I seen the sky of such heavenly hue as it was that morning; the lake was smooth



A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

as glass not a ripple disturbing its calm, sparkling like a diamond in the sunlight. At first the Island seemed but a speck upon this great body of water, then as the steamer was nearing it seemed a peaceful deserted beauty-spot. The Fort upon the hill, its white walls dazzling the eye seemed to me typical of the purity of early America. At the foot of the hill nestled the houses as they do today, but more primitive, more a part of nature's wonderful picture than now.

The Island seemed deserted, until the hoarse blast of the steamer's signal was sounded and in response people were seen leisurely making their way to the wharf.

At that time there were few if any visitors on the Island, but to-day it is not hard to know the native, for the real Islander has never fathomed the definition of *haste*. Theirs is indeed the simplicity of living but with all the simple exterior do





BLACKBIRD

not consider them slow where the American eagle in metal is concerned. Pardon my wandering.

My father met us on the wharf. Our meeting was most joyous and a short walk brought us to our home. However, we did not reach there before I met disappointment in my father telling us that a few hours before he received Aunt's letter announcing the time of our arrival, my mother had started in a Mackinaw sail-boat to visit her people on the mainland some miles north of here, the date of her return uncertain.

My Aunt seemed relieved; why, I now understand. For me the joy of the morning was gone; that meeting for which I had so ardently longed and for which I had traveled so far was again a thing of the future. During our breakfast my Aunt requested I would not mingle with the natives and my father forbade me doing so,





A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND.

saying that while they were honest, well meaning people they were not to be my associates. My reply was:—

“The people do not interest me but I would like to talk with an Indian Brave. Did you notice the handsome youth who stood at our gate as we passed in?” My father and Aunt frowned and ate in silence.

The beautiful weather continued and I drove, walked, rowed and dreamt. The spell of the Island was upon me. In its perfect peace I almost believed the Indian tradition that it had once been the home of the “Gitchie Manitou.”

Around “arch rock,” “chimney rock,” “sugar loaf” and every cave or rock I would weave a romance to tell John when we would visit these spots together. ‘Lovers Leap’ I have always connected with the handsome Brave seen the morning of my arrival. I pictured him as the mythi-

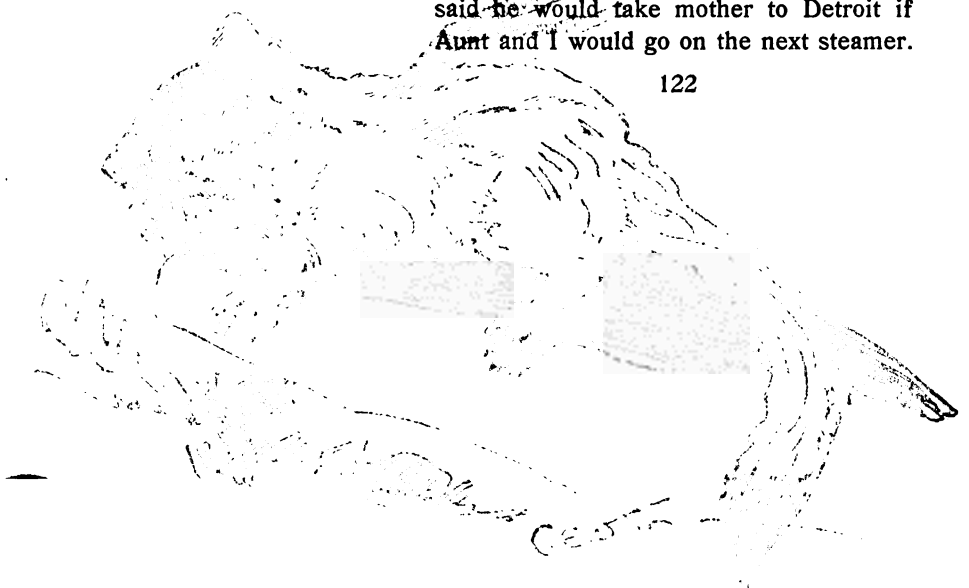


BLACKBIRD

cal warrior for whom the mythical maid leapt from the height of its 145 feet.

One day I wandered to "British Landing." The charm and loneliness of the spot made me melancholy. I wanted my mother and in my solitude spoke aloud, "Ah mother, mother I want you so." I was startled by a noise in the bushes; the handsome Brave was standing beside me, his eyes full of pity. Startled I jumped to my feet saying "What do you want?" No reply, I repeated my question.

"Pretty squaw no cry, me young brave, Raven bring mother" and before I could speak he had gone. The next day and for several days my father and Aunt wearied me by importuning me to start for Detroit and meet John and be married there. Leave the Island before I had seen my mother! indeed I would not. Then father said he would take mother to Detroit if Aunt and I would go on the next steamer.



A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

I consented. The next steamer would be on the third day from then; on the morning of the second day I was awakened by voices in the garden under my window, one was the voice of my father the other a woman's saying with a marked Indian accent "I no go, big white chief no love poor squaw." Then they passed from under the window and I heard no more. Hurriedly dressing I ran down stairs in search of my father. I entered the living room and was astounded to see standing there a beautiful squaw in her native dress, her long, raven tresses braided and interwoven with bright beads; held close in her arms was a large white cat to which she was talking in a mixture of English and Indian, all I could understand was "Reginald" and "Bebe."

I stood fascinated. When she turned and saw me, after carefully depositing the cat in a huge chair she came to me and

BLACKBIRD

placing her hands on my shoulders peered into my face for several seconds, then with tears streaming down her cheeks threw her arms around me calling me "Bebe," "Little Blackbird," "Little Blackbird." My father strode into the room in a rage. At the window I saw the handsome Brave and heard him say while pointing at the Squaw, "Raven bring mother." My father commanded me to leave the room. It all rushed upon me, my years of absence and ignorance of my mother, the anxiety to have me leave for Detroit. Three things were written in fire on my brain and were dancing fiendishly before me:—

"This squaw was my mother."

"I was a half breed."

"What would John Beech with his pride of birth say?"

I took refuge in my room and was soon followed by my mother bearing the white cat. In broken English she told me of

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

her love and longing for me during the years of our separation; that she loved me I could not doubt and I was torn in conflicting emotions first love, then repugnance. I paced the floor, the cat was in the sunshine on the window-sill, I felt impelled to do something cruel, I picked it up and was about to hurl it through the window when a startled exclamation from my father who was entering the room brought me to my senses. I dropped the cat which leapt into my mother's arms, there to be fondled. My father bade me come into the arbor near the house with him. My mother clung to me crying that he would again steal her bebe Blackbird.

I quieted her by saying "Mother I am no baby but a squaw, and by the Great Spirit I promise to remain with you." She being satisfied, we, my father and I, went to the arbor. Father was agitated and about to reproach me for coming to the



BLACKBIRD

Island. I said:—

“Hush father, this is not the time for reproaches on either side.” I must know our story in every detail and I will tell you word for word, dearest Margaret, what he told me. I have never forgotten it; I never will. Through all that great Eternity on which I am soon to enter it will be with me graven on my soul.

Poor father humiliated and pitiful said:

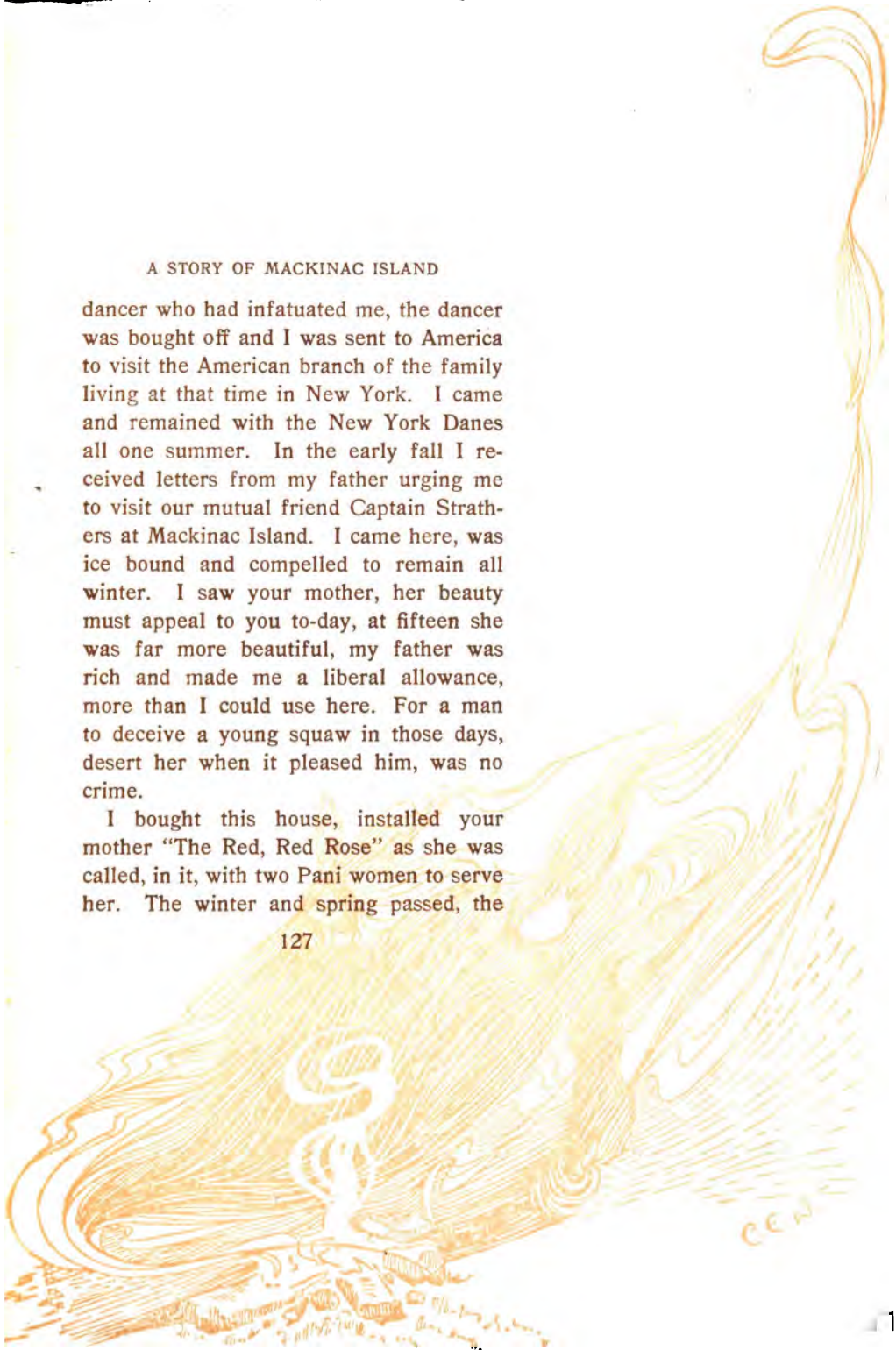
“I am the younger son of a titled Englishman and the black sheep of the family. When I was but twenty years of age I met in London a Captain Strathers of the U. S. A. stationed at the Post on this Island but on leave of absence and in London on private matters. I took him to my father’s home. All were captivated with him and he left with many invitations to us, to at some time visit him at his Post here.

The next spring I had displeased my father by my threats to marry a French

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

dancer who had infatuated me, the dancer was bought off and I was sent to America to visit the American branch of the family living at that time in New York. I came and remained with the New York Danes all one summer. In the early fall I received letters from my father urging me to visit our mutual friend Captain Strathers at Mackinac Island. I came here, was ice bound and compelled to remain all winter. I saw your mother, her beauty must appeal to you to-day, at fifteen she was far more beautiful, my father was rich and made me a liberal allowance, more than I could use here. For a man to deceive a young squaw in those days, desert her when it pleased him, was no crime.

I bought this house, installed your mother "The Red, Red Rose" as she was called, in it, with two Pani women to serve her. The winter and spring passed, the



BLACKBIRD

summer was waning, and with it my infatuation for "The Red, Red Rose." I had moved to my friend's quarters to pay him a final visit before returning to England. For three weeks I remained and did not see "The Red, Red Rose," though it was hard not to run down the hill to the white house nestling among the trees

Dr. B., the post Surgeon told me she was ill; fight as I would I could no longer remain away so that night very late I knocked on the door, the older Pani woman opened it and with finger on lip led me to the next chamber where my "Red, Red Rose" was sleeping, and nestled on her arm was as fair a little Englishman as ever drew breath on American soil.

I knelt throughout the remainder of the night and so Dr. B. found me when he called at daylight.

His coming awakened her. Her delight at seeing me and her fear that I would

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

again leave her were pitiful.

I followed Dr. B. into the garden. His first words were a question. "When do you leave?" "To-day was the time set," I answered.

"Have you a sister?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Her age is?"

"Eighteen."

"The Red, Red Rose is not yet fifteen" and with an oath the old surgeon left me.

I entered the house. She was sleeping again. I went to the Fort for two days and then a third and fourth day. I neither slept or ate. On the morning of the fifth day I called on the Rev. Mr. J., the post Chaplain; together we came down here and the "Red, Red Rose" became my wife.

England and my people were forever lost to me; my duty, nay more, my love lay here.

The boy I called Reginald after my fath-

BLACKBIRD

er. He thrived and grew into our hearts for five years, then he died. Many predicted that I would return to England. They did not know my wife or fathom my love for her.

She pleased in all save two things, her manner of dress and her belief, she was Indian and I could not change her. I believed my boy's soul was safe with God. She, that it entered the body of some animal, she would know it by the eyes.

Three years after the boy's death you were born. She loved you, but you could not supplant Reginald in her heart.

One blustery March night the white cat which you were about to ill treat mewed at the door, your mother opened the door and took it, crying that it was Reginald come back to her and she has ever since cherished it in that belief.

The next summer your Aunt visited me and learned for the first time of my mar-

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

riage. She agreed with me that I had done the only honorable thing but regretted that you would have no civilized training. You were then four years old and garbed in squaw attire.

All through the summer "Red, Red Rose" had thought and time for the cat only, so in the fall I allowed your Aunt to take you with her.

Your mother has not missed you until this last year and I had decided that you should never know that which I have told you to-day.

When your Aunt wrote you were determined to come here, I took your mother to her people to remain until I would go to bring her home.

The young brave you admired is her brother's son. He told her you were here and brought her home.

Now my child you have heard all—mine has been a wasted life—do not ruin yours

BLACKBIRD

by remaining here. Go to Detroit, marry Captain Beech there, and go East with him. Your Aunt will explain the absence of your mother and me in a satisfactory way.

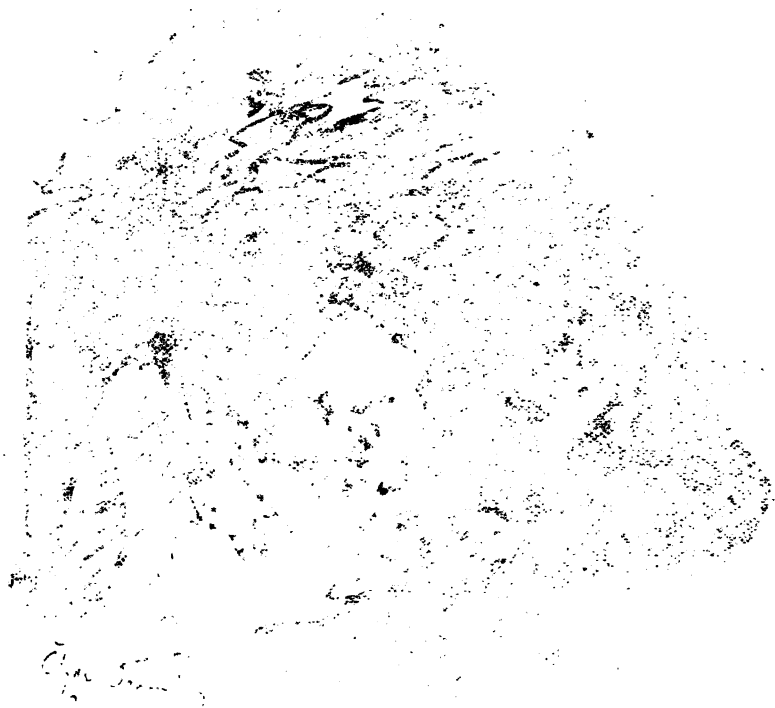
I refused saying, John Beech is no less a man than you father. He shall come here and I will tell him this story and you shall see that it will not alter his love for me or intentions toward me.

My father begged me to comply with his wishes but in vain.

Father's story was ended. We sat hand in hand in the arbor, pain surging through our hearts. After a time my mother "Red, Red Rose" came and silently sat beside me, and so sat we three filled with conflicting emotions the long day through, until twilight.

We never referred to the story again.

In two weeks John Beech came, he asked for me. My mother received and told



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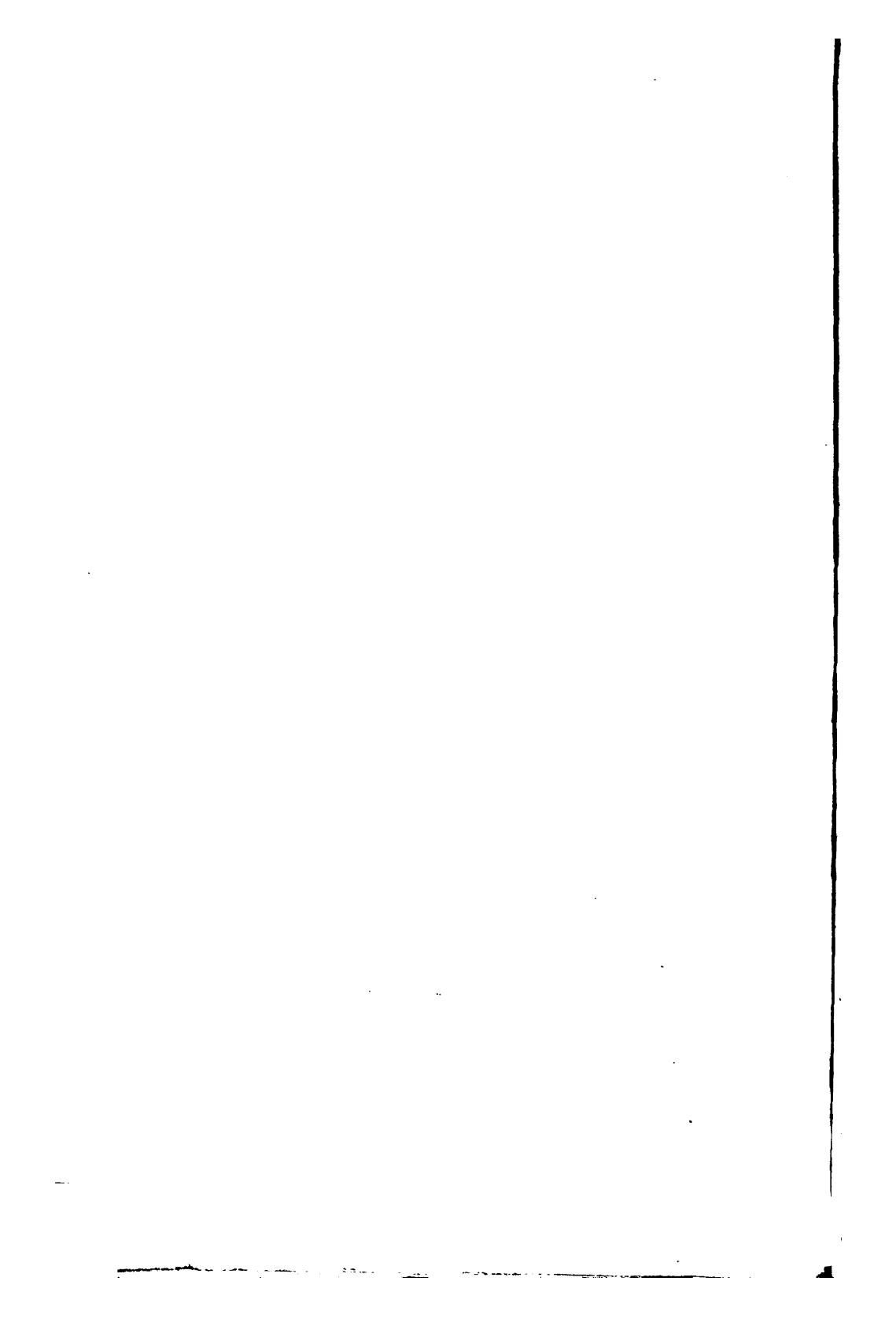
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A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

him she was my mother, that the white cat was my brother Reginald. John Beech did not wait to see me. The steamer on which he arrived remained an hour to give the passengers an opportunity to visit the places of interest.

He had barely time to reach the steamer. I watched him go, and as the steamer sailed away I saw him pacing the deck to and fro, gone out of my life as the sunshine had gone from my heart and soul. A few days after I received this note which has been ever with me. I copy it for you.

"Miss Maraquita:—

"An explanation from me is hardly necessary in view of the circumstances, yet I wish to say, though I shall always love you, and remember you, I cannot marry you.

Since the first John Beech came to these shores in the *Mayflower* we have been esteemed and honored. I tell you this that

BLACKBIRD

you may know how impossible it is for me to marry a half breed.

Yours,

John Beech."

I was to suffer for my race not because the white man had driven the Indian onward to extermination, not because the white man had beguiled an Indian child of not more than fourteen years of age into loving him, not because I had that white man's blood in my veins must I be cast aside. No, but I had also coursing through my veins the blood of the tender, trusting Indian girl; for this must I suffer desertion, the pitying scorn of so-called friends and the loving pity of true friends. I asked myself who were my friends and decided I had none. I would forget my old life and remain with my parents, though the white cat made me sick unto death.

A Higher Power than mine willed other-

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

wise; my parents died together. I went away with my Aunt. A good man who knew my story, for he had been stationed on the Island, asked me to marry him.

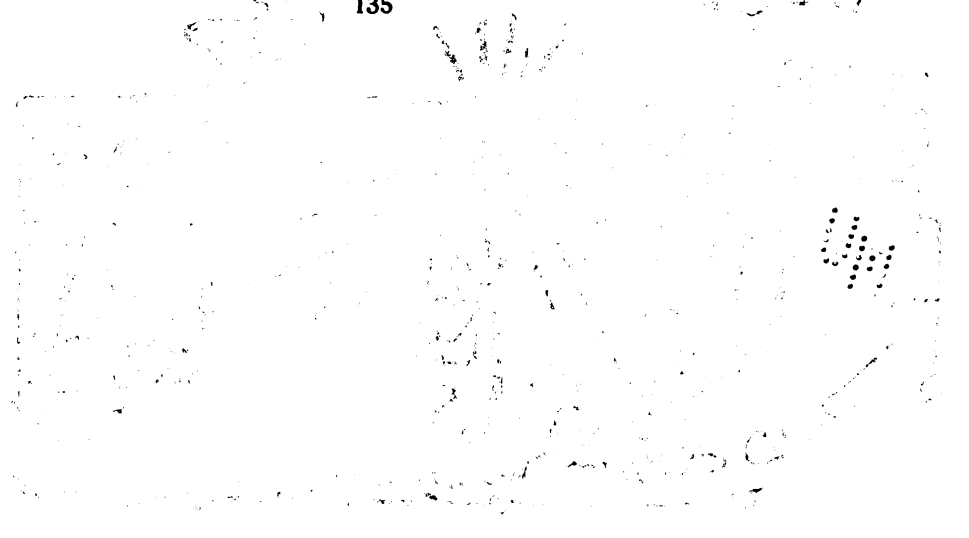
I longed to, for I admired and respected him as the truest man I had ever known.

I loved John Beech and said "NO."

Aunt Dane took me abroad. We travelled: She lost a great deal of money until all that was left was some land, many acres in fact, in Ohio, and a sum of money so small that we could not live on the interest no matter how frugal our fare. The strain was too great and in England she collapsed and died after an illness of only a few days.

She had deeded me the lands and given me charge of the money. I went to Paris hoping to pose as a model, for a distinguished artist who was about to paint a picture of Pocahontas.

I had posed several times when he de-



BLACKBIRD

cided to go to America and paint his picture. I had only a few francs and they were soon spent. I was desperate, cold and famishing, I was alone in the world, I would not be missed, the river seemed the only way.

I had been living under an alias, I destroyed all marks of identification and left the pension for the end. It was snowing so thickly one could hardly see. As I turned the corner of the street, I was almost knocked over by a young man running down the steps of a house. He asked me to direct him to a doctor; his wife was alone with their two small children, she was suffering, a hemorrhage; would Ma'mselle go in and remain with her until the Doctor could be gotten. I went in and found a young American with two small children, one about three and the other six years of age.

The Doctor arrived and checked the



A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

hemorrhage, taking it for granted I was the nurse, gave his directions to me and departed.

I was in my turn giving them to the husband when he interrupted and begged that I would remain with them.

He was, he told me, a young German Baron who had displeased his people and the Emperor by marrying an American, the companion of a wealthy American lady, who had visited his people, a girl without a penny. The small allowance his family still sent him barely sufficed to cover the expenses incurred by her illness and if I would remain until he could find a wealthy friend whom, he heard, had arrived in Paris that day, he could secure a loan and have a nurse for his wife.

I told him in return, part of my story and where I was bound when he intercepted me. I was of no use in the world unless I could be useful to them.



BLACKBIRD

Well, I remained with my good friends; we were very poor; at the end of eighteen months the Baroness died. I had promised to care for the children and in a measure I was happy for I had a mission in life, some person found me necessary. After the death of the Baroness we retired to a small place in the country taking with us an old woman who had assisted with the work and who persisted in calling me Madame and Baroness and as such I was soon known. The children called me Mama Mara and after a time dropped the Mara. I had forgotten to tell you that a few months after the death of the Baroness the Baron received a small legacy which enabled him to live rather better. I wished to leave but he would not hear of it and offered marriage to me. As I still loved John Beech you know my answer.

Then I heard from my Ohio lands. Oil had made me fabulously wealthy.

A STORY OF MACKINAC ISLAND

I went to the Baron and told him. I also begged that he would not expect me to leave them for I could not and would not. I must be allowed to do for them as they had for me.

I made a trip to Paris. We changed our residence. I made another trip to Paris and saw Lieutenant Grane, moved to another hotel to avoid him, no not him, but to avoid explanations and on the spur of the moment registered as a Countess.

Several years passed; the Baron died giving his daughters to me. They believe I am their mother and John Beech believes it. I met him at a garden party in England, he and his wife neither looking very happy on one side, and on the other, the rejected half breed; I do not know how I looked but I know I was unhappy and yet exultant. I was rich, bore a title, could introduce these lovely fair-haired, blue-eyed Germans as my daughters and

BLACKBIRD

none dared dispute me.

I had suffered much, but the misery in John Beech's eyes when I presented my daughters increased my suffering ten-fold.

Now, my dearest Margaret, I have told you all the years have held for me, and must beg you to forgive this long silence and I feel you will, when I tell you that I have many times followed your carriage just to look on your face, have longed to go to you, but could not with a lie on my lips.

To these two dear girls I have assigned my fortune and instructed them to go to you when I am dead and lying alone as in life, in the little desolate cemetery in the woods. I want you to tell them all I have told you. Tell them I am not their mother. I am not Maraquita as my Aunt called me. I am, dearest Margaret, to you and all, only Blackbird, the daughter of the "Red, Red Rose."

"LETTER 60."

Mrs. Thorn to John Grane.

Mackinac Island, October 1891.

My dear John:—

A letter received at Chicago four days ago is the cause of me writing you from here.

In your army days you were stationed here and I am sure know Maraquita's history. Why did you never confide in me?

When I received her letter I was overjoyed; joy soon turned to sorrow when I learned that she was ill.

Having no one but myself to please since your Uncle's death, I hurriedly started for here hoping to once again see the poor child, for child she must always seem to me. I wanted her to know the longing which you and I had ever felt to see her.